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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts – December 7, 1974, 50 cents

Cesar Chavez Against the Wall

Peter Barnes

Ford on the Road – *John Osborne*

Udall's Candidacy – *Paul R. Wieck*

SIX NOTEWORTHY NOVELS

reviewed by Jonathan Yardley, Saul Maloff, James Boatwright, Melvin J. Friedman, Robert Leiter, William Kennedy

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If television only played favorites, you wouldn't see many of these programs.

If television only wanted to reach for the biggest audiences every night, it would be easy enough.

It could simply feed people a steady diet of the most popular program types. Situation comedies, suspense and police dramas.

But to do this would sap the vitality of a medium that can satisfy many tastes.

The weeks ahead would bring you no Shakespeare or Arthur Miller. No documentaries on the relationship of men and women, on Renaissance art, on Anwar Sadat, on drinking water and on safety standards. There'd be no prime-time specials for children.

Whatever your preferences, television seeks to serve them with novelty and variety. With attention to special needs. With awareness that, for many, television is the only avenue to history and drama and information.

To illustrate this point—and help the selective viewer—here is a sampling of entries for December and January.

The Wild Places. Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward are guides in majestic natural areas. Monday, Dec. 2 (8-9 pm).

The Red Badge of Courage. Stephen Crane's Civil War novel. Tuesday, Dec. 3 (8:30-10 pm).

The American Parade. Portrait of General George C. Marshall. Thursday, Dec. 5 (9-10 pm); The Case Against Milligan. Sunday, Jan. 19 (7:30-8:30 pm).

Caution: Water May Be Dangerous to Your Health. CBS Reports on health hazards in drinking water. Thursday, Dec. 5 (10-11 pm).

My Fair Lady. Lerner and Lowe musical. Saturday, Dec. 7 (9-11 pm); Monday, Dec. 9 (9-10:45 pm).

The Year Without A Santa Claus. Based on Phyllis McGinley novel, with voices of Shirley Booth, Mickey Rooney. Tuesday, Dec. 10 (8-9 pm).

After the Fall. Arthur Miller's play with Faye Dunaway, Christopher Plummer. Tuesday, Dec. 10 (8:30-11 pm).

Out to Lunch. Family comedy-variety produced by Children's Television Workshop with Elliott Gould, Barbara Eden, Sesame Street Muppets. Tuesday, Dec. 10 (9-10 pm).

ABC Afterschool Special. Magical Mystery Trip Through Little Red's Head; Pssst! Hammerman's After You!; The Runaway. Wednesdays, Dec. 11, Jan. 8, Jan. 22 (4:30-5:30 pm).

NBC News Presents. UFO: Do You Believe? Sunday, Dec. 15 (10-11 pm); The Navajo Way. Monday, Dec. 23 (10-11 pm).

Ben Franklin. The Whirlwind. Tuesday, Dec. 17 (9:30-11 pm); The Rebel. Thursday, Jan. 9 (8:30-10 pm); The Statesman. Tuesday, Jan. 28 (8:30-10 pm).

The Missiles of October. Dramatic account of U.S.-U.S.S.R. confrontation. Wednesday, Dec. 18 (8-11 pm).

Anwar Sadat. ABC News Action Biography of Egypt's President. Thursday, Dec. 19 (10-11 pm).

1974: A Television Album. CBS News survey of year's major events. Sunday, Dec. 22 (6-7 pm).

Scrooge. Musical with Albert Finney, Alec Guinness, Edith Evans. Monday, Dec. 23 (8-10 pm).

GE Theater. I Heard the Owl Call My Name. Monday, Dec. 23 (8:30-10 pm); Miles to Go Before I Sleep. Wednesday, Jan. 8 (9:30-11 pm).

The Politics of Safety. ABC News Close-Up on lax safety standards in transportation. Thursday, Dec. 26 (8-9 pm).

Antony and Cleopatra. ABC Theatre—Royal Shakespeare Company production of Shakespeare's tragedy. Saturday, Jan. 4 (8-11 pm).

Golden Spring. Renaissance art filmed in Venice, Florence, Rome. Sunday, Jan. 5 (3-4 pm).

Year-End Report. NBC News correspondents review year's highlights. Sunday, Jan. 5 (time TBA).

Beavers of the North Country. Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau. Monday, Jan. 6 (8-9 pm).

Ceremonies in Dark Old Men. ABC Theatre—Negro Ensemble Company in drama set in Harlem. Monday, Jan. 6 (9-11 pm).

Antonio and the Mayor. Effect a boy's new bicycle has on rural Mexican community. Wednesday, Jan. 8 (8-9:30 pm).

Tennessee Ernie's Nashville-Moscow Express. Ford and Co. bring our music to Russia, visit sites never filmed before. Wednesday, January 8 (10-11 pm).

Rikki Tikki Tavi. Rudyard Kipling tale. Thursday, Jan. 9 (8-8:30 pm).

Adventure in America. ABC News explores forest fire threat. Thursday, Jan. 9 (8-9 pm).

NBC News Special. Explores basic, revolutionary transformation under way in relationships between men and women. Thursday, Jan. 9 (8-11 pm).

The Count of Monte Cristo. Bell System Family Theatre—New production of Dumas novel. Friday, Jan. 10 (8-10 pm).

Stowaway to the Moon. Boy's adventure on space flight. Friday, Jan. 17 (8-10 pm).

Queen of the Stardust Ballroom. Maureen Stapleton in drama of widow's struggle. Thursday, Jan. 23 (9-11 pm).

Be My Valentine, Charlie Brown. Tuesday, Jan. 28 (8-8:30 pm).

Smithsonian: Flight. History of aviation. Friday, Jan. 31 (9-10 pm).

ABC News Close-Up. Investigates illegal immigration. Date and time TBA.

MOSTLY FOR YOUNG VIEWERS

Santa Claus is Coming to Town, Thurs., Dec. 5 (8-9 pm); **Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus,** Fri., Dec. 6 (8-8:30 pm); **The Man Without A Country,** Fri., Dec. 6 (8:30-10 pm); **The Count of Monte Cristo,** Sat., Dec. 7 (4-5 pm); **A Christmas Carol,** Sat., Dec. 7 (8-8:30 pm); **The Point,** Sat., Dec. 7 (8:30-10 pm); **Frosty the Snowman,** Sun., Dec. 8 (7:30-8 pm); **'Twas the Night Before Christmas,** Sun., Dec. 8 (8-8:30 pm); **The Homecoming,** Sun., Dec. 8 (8:30-10:30 pm); **Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas,** Fri., Dec. 13 (8-8:30 pm); **Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer,** Fri., Dec. 13 (8:30-9:30 pm); **The Borrowers,** Fri., Dec. 13 (8:30-10 pm); **The House Without A Christmas Tree,** Fri., Dec. 13 (9:30-11 pm); **A Christmas Carol,** Sat., Dec. 14 (2-3 pm); **The Little Drummer Boy,** Sun., Dec. 15 (7:30-8 pm); **The Bear Who Slept Through Christmas,** Mon., Dec. 16 (8-8:30 pm); **A Charlie Brown Christmas,** Tues., Dec. 17 (8-8:30 pm); **A Dream For Christmas,** Sat., Dec. 21 (8-10 pm); **Aesop's Fables,** Mon., Dec. 23 (8-8:30 pm); **A Child's Christmas in Wales,** Wed., Dec. 25 (3:30-4:30 pm); **Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat,** Fri., Jan. 31 (8-8:30 pm); **The Little Mermaid,** Fri., Jan. 31 (8:30-9 pm).

REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

Monday through Friday: Sunrise Semester/CBS Morning News/The Today Show/Captain Kangaroo/Sesame Street/Mister Rogers' Neighborhood/Electric Company/Zoom/Villa Alegre

Saturday: In the News/Schoolhouse Rock/Yogi's Gang/Emergency+4/Land of the Lost/Valley of the Dinosaurs/Sigmund and the Sea Monsters/Korg: 70,000 B.C.!/Harlem Globetrotters Popcorn Machine/Star Trek/Hudson Brothers Razzle Dazzle Comedy Show/U.S. of Archie/These are the Days/GO/Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids/CBS Children's Film Festival/The Reasoner Report/Weekend

Sunday: In the News/Schoolhouse Rock/Lamp Unto My Feet/Look Up and Live/Camera Three/Make a Wish/Face the Nation/Meet the Press/Directions/Issues and Answers/The Wonderful World of Disney/Nova/Masterpiece Theatre/NBC News Specials/Weekend

Note: This is, necessarily, a partial listing. Time (NYT), titles and casts of these national programs are subject to change. Please consult your station listings; check also for noteworthy local programs.

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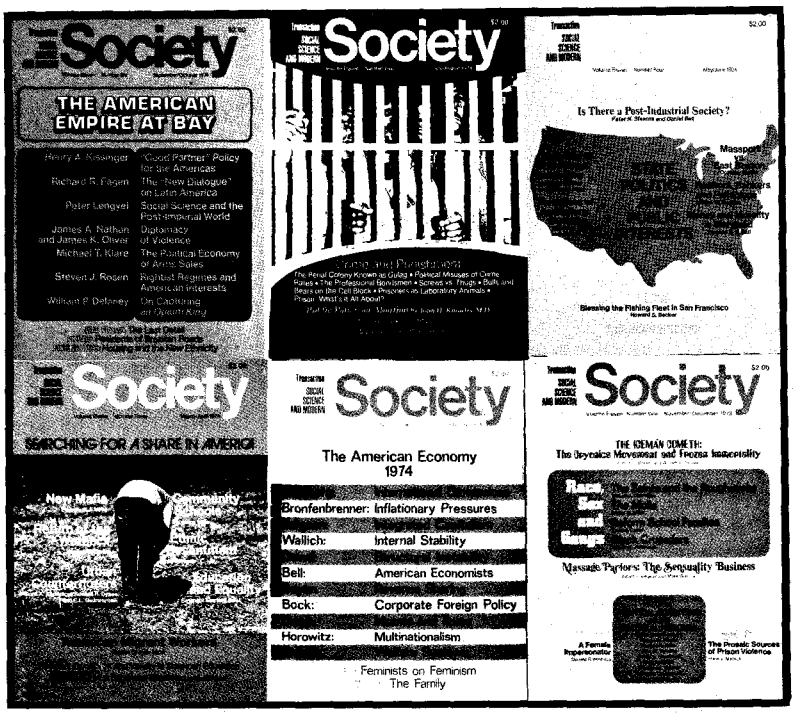
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TRB

from Beirut
December 7, 1974

Will It Be War?

I am standing on Rue Hussein Talhouk amid 20-story newly built apartments owned by sheik oil money. Three men and a small truck are delivering a spanking new Frigidaire to a private dwelling. A figure out of the Arabian Nights in a robe tied at his waist maneuvers the entire refrigerator onto his back, and braced by a rope round his forehead he staggers up two stories. He would carry it four stories if the family lived higher.

This is Beirut, an island of "neutrality" in the Middle East. Its southern villages harbor Palestine guerrillas which Israel bombs now and then. Lebanon's token army does not make war. Lebanon has perhaps three million people, theoretically half of them Christian, half Arab, though nobody takes a census because the Arab birthrate is higher and the political structure is based on theoretical equality. There are also perhaps 10,000 Jews who trade normally. It is the banking and the intelligence center of the area; much of the Middle East news you read is datelined "Beirut."

Rome rides its nimble, cat-footed Fiats, but here huge American and European gas-guzzlers make the wildest traffic I have ever seen (though some put Damascus ahead). Almost no traffic cops; almost no traffic lights; "sidewalks" are used for parking; I watched a driver make a wrong-way cutoff up a narrow, one-way street. You wait to dart between cars over streets torn up for new construction. Some call it a second Paris, this throbbing, dynamic city between mountains and blue Mediterranean, into which it pours untreated sewage.

Here comes a creaky wagon between a lavish Mercedes and an Opel in the bumper-to-bumper traffic, the driver standing and honking a rubber horn off some forgotten vintage car and shouting "Kaz! Kaz!" for kerosene. Nobody heeds. The throng wears modern clothes, with now and then a Turk in fez and baggy pants, or a Saudi in white headdress and sheet.

This is the crossroads and testingplace of the Middle East and it is oppressed with the fear of war. Not war in which Lebanon can hope for a glorious part; its ultimate aspiration is to survive. It is a Phoenician capital, it has seen conquerors come and go, pharaohs, Greeks, Romans, Turks, French—and a British cannonball or two is wedged in the Crusaders' fort at Biblyos, from some misunderstanding in the past century.

Always and everywhere the question at diplomatic or private parties is "What will America do?" It was like this in Berlin perhaps in 1914, and again in 1939. The Paris *Herald Tribune* says, "Israeli Mobilization Report Feeds Middle East Tensions." Later comes Arafat's

speech to the UN, and the barbaric hijackings by Arab fanatics. Lebanese President Suleiman Franjieh had his nose put out of joint by the Americans when he failed to get what he considered an appropriate official US welcome at the UN, and when customs dogs sniffed the official baggage for hashish. Small points, you say, but he came as representative of certain Arab states and these small items are the very slights that the supersensitive Middle East is looking for from patronizing America. Franjieh got his apology after Ambassador Godley hastily flew back to Washington.

Is there a right or wrong in this struggle? To make a homeland for Jews, Palestinians were ousted, and now they want back, and unassimilated Palestinian camps, almost colonies in themselves, swell Lebanon's problems.

I wake at 4:30 to hear the rise and fall of the Koran chanted from surrounding minarets, ecstatic, religious, sonorous. How can the human voice rise so loud? It doesn't; they are using recordings; it is mechanized acoustical metaphysics. I turn on the ear-plug radio and hear the steady, unemotional, upper-class BBC voice calmly reporting disasters. Over the city roar airport planes as noisy in this open-window California-climate town as though they were right in the room. Nobody pays attention. But when a couple of planes break the sound barrier with a bang-bang, people move uneasily. Is it war yet? No, they say, not yet.

It would behoove America to know this world better. US technicians and engineers swarm back from Arab countries and argue American news is slanted. Janice Terry and Gordon Mendenhall of Eastern Michigan University, in an article printed in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* (autumn 1974) weigh coverage of *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Detroit Free Press* of the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict, as part of a 25-year study. I distrust these IBM punchcard surveys of alleged newspaper prejudice, but for what it's worth they assert that news, editorials and features "again reveal a rather consistent pro-Israeli and anti-Arab bias." Maybe. I am more impressed by a less sweeping generalization from a top-rank resident American journalist here: "The US has been behind the rest of the world on the Palestine issue for 10 years," he says.

A Seth Thomas electric clock of my host acts erratically and I take it into an electrician. "Take it back to America," he advises, "it won't work here; we are on different cycles." Is it symbolic?

Why do they all hate each other, wonders the naive American? The story is of the scorpion and the frog faced with a flood; the frog agrees to carry the scorpion over to the other side if the latter will intercede with his enemies there. Halfway across the scorpion stings the frog. "Now we will both die," says the sinking frog, "why did you do that?" The answer comes clear: "Because this is the Middle East," says the scorpion.

On the way to the airport I pass the Shateela Palestine refugee camp. It is a great shanty town. They fill out their meager UN handouts with combings from the adjacent garbage dump.

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Overseeing the Secret Services

The principle of accountability to the public is at the heart of representative government. But it is a difficult principle to apply when those to whom broad authority has been delegated are shielded from public scrutiny. In these instances it becomes all the more important that shielded officials understand and observe the restraints a free society imposes on all officers of government. That applies particularly to the directors of our intelligence and investigative organizations—the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency and the Secret Service—and to a lesser extent to the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff. These men do not stand for election, do not have to defend or even explain their performance, nor are they subjected to continual, detailed public questioning by Congress or the press. Because they are not openly accountable day to day, they can command public confidence only when the public believes they have respect for the limits of power and are men of integrity and intelligence. Such officials are not, of course, wholly unsupervised. The task of ensuring that enormous grants of authority to public servants who work mostly undercover are not misused rests with the executive branch, which directs the immediate work of these officials, and with the legislative branch, which has responsibility for what is called "oversight." Given the disillusioning "oversight" record of the Nixon administration, it is primarily the Congress that is now expected to be the guardian of the clandestine guardians of our security.

The congressional performance has heretofore not been one from which the public can take comfort. Although the Senate and the House each have had CIA oversight committees for years, they have been blind defenders rather than sharp questioners. For the 40 years that J. Edgar Hoover was its director, the FBI went its way with almost no congressional or Justice Department control. Hoover's only regular appearance on Capitol Hill each year was before a House Appropriations subcommittee, where for half a day he would rattle off statistics and stories about the bureau's "amazing" accomplishments. Allegations of illegal or unethical FBI behavior were never seriously discussed in those sweetheart sessions, and no other congressional committee ever summoned the FBI chief to testify.

Within the past year, however, news of FBI misconduct has surfaced from within the post-Hoover bureau. First there was the disclosure of 17 so-called "national security" wiretaps of newsmen and

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government officials. More recently details of a massive 15-year "counter-intelligence" program initiated by Hoover on his own authority came to light. Using a variety of techniques including forgery, the bureau had tampered with and attempted to destroy organizations and individuals engaged in "new left" activities that Director Hoover determined were contrary to the best interests of the country. And last week William Sullivan, once the number two man in the FBI who quit because he believed Hoover was getting too soft on Communists and radicals, submitted an extraordinary paper to an American Trial Lawyers Foundation conference. Sullivan wrote that "the FBI, as it is now structured, is a potential threat to our civil liberties . . . To be candid," he added, "the 'right to privacy' was not at issue nor was it an impediment to solving cases. It mattered not whether electronic devices or other techniques were used . . . The issues were black and white and crystal clear. The primacy of civil liberties on occasions gave way to expediency."

Given these disclosures, what has Congress done to put new vigor into its supervision of the bureau? In the wake of the Senate Judiciary Committee's confirmation hearings on former acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray, chairman James Eastland last year set up an FBI oversight subcommittee with himself as chairman. One researcher was hired and the subcommittee—using the part-time assistance of one committee aide—talked about holding hearings on the controversial intelligence operations. The impeachment hearings brought that endeavor to a halt.

Then, this May, FBI Director Clarence Kelley and Attorney General William Saxbe asked to meet with the Eastland subcommittee to discuss a sensitive development. Thanks to a freedom of information lawsuit brought by newsman Carl Stern, the FBI was being pressed to disclose details of Hoover's counterintelligence apparatus, called "cointelpro." Saxbe and Kelley gave Eastland and Sen. Hruska, the subcommittee's ranking Republican, the details of a Justice Department study of "cointelpro" and suggested the subcommittee make the study public and hold hearings. (To Saxbe, much in the Hoover program was "abhorrent in a free society.") Eastland and Hruska declined the suggestion and encouraged Saxbe to keep the whole thing quiet.

Word of the cointelpro study reached members of the House Judiciary Committee, who were at the time struggling with the problem of FBI oversight. House Judiciary chairman Peter Rodino—up to his ears in impeachment—showed no interest, however, refused to be briefed on cointelpro by Saxbe and turned the responsibility over to a subcommittee headed by Rep. Don Edwards, who, though a former FBI agent, has been critical of intelligence operations. Meanwhile a second House Judiciary subcommittee chaired by another FBI critic, Rep. Robert Kastenmeier (D, Wisc.), was interested in what clandestine agencies are up to. Fifteen separate bills sponsored by 50 members had been introduced in the House dealing with national security wiretaps, and since April 1974 Kastenmeier's subcommittee had been pressing the FBI for details. Faced with the prospect of giving bureau files to the GAO, cointelpro information to the Edwards subcom-

"Oh him . . . well, heck, we only turn him loose when it's necessary!"

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mittee, and facts about national security wiretapping to the Kastenmeier group, the bureau balked, refused both subcommittees any information. It began negotiating with the GAO over what it would or would not make available to congressional auditors.

On Saturday, November 16 Saxbe and Kelley asked for a meeting with Edwards and the ranking Republican on his subcommittee, Rep. Charles E. Wiggins. The cointelpro report was to be handed newsmen that day and the congressmen were to get a private briefing on it—three months after they first sought it. To add insult to injury, the cointelpro story appeared in a Washington newspaper before the private briefing could take place. The congressmen were furious and demanded a public appearance before their subcommittee the following week. It was pique that prompted calling that meeting. And it was pique that brought FBI Director Kelley, Deputy Attorney General Lawrence Silberman and Assistant Attorney General Henry Petersen to it. Neither side was well prepared. An effort at the start by subcommittee Republicans to close the hearing to the public and press failed, but only after a confused argument.

Subcommittee chairman Edwards regarded the public session as a way of getting FBI Director Kelley and his Justice Department bosses on record opposing the reinstatement of cointelpro by the bureau. Reps. Charles Rangel and Robert McClory wanted to know why this group or that was singled out for investigation and infiltration. Rangel wanted to know which black groups were targets; McClory thought he might want to see if the individuals involved were as dangerous as they had been described in bureau reports. Rep. Jerome Waldie asked for the names of "friendly media sources" to whom stories were given that would be injurious or embarrassing to groups under FBI scrutiny. Rep. Robert Drinan asked Silberman whether the Justice Department planned to inform individuals whose economic livelihoods were deliberately damaged by the FBI. Silberman, whose department had already discussed the inevitability of civil suits arising from cointelpro, refused an immediate answer.

What should FBI oversight entail? The new bureau leadership and present Justice Department officials agree there should be a congressional role, but they haven't defined it. Congress as a whole has no idea what it wants. Senators balked at doing anything after being told of cointelpro; FBI critics in Congress would probably hesitate if asked to clear controversial bureau operations in advance. William Ruckelshaus, who served briefly as FBI director, believes that Congress—either through established subcommittees or through a new, joint House-Senate committee—*must* get more deeply into the work of the bureau, for law enforcement officials left on their own—particularly left to undertake a wide range of covert activities—are bound to do things they should not.

Congressional Record

The 93rd Congress lurches toward adjournment with a large baggage of unfinished business on its back and little chance of unloading it before the session ends on January 3. The sudden burst of activity since members returned from the election recess is a traditional end-of-season attempt to get something done, and in some cases to make certain one's committee isn't left holding the bill that should have been reported out last summer. The real achievements have been few and uncontroversial. After the elections an emboldened Congress easily overrode President Ford's vetoes of the Freedom of Information Act amendments and the vocational rehabilitation bill. The first of these sets deadlines within which government agencies must answer requests for documents, and the second provides another year of funding for federal rehabilitation programs. Even Republicans said that Mr. Ford was ill-advised to veto such popular bills as these.

Since coming back to the capital, the legislators have also passed two new bills, one giving the Environmental Protection Agency power to set safe drinking water standards and another authorizing $12 billion in federal expenditures on mass transit. The transit bill, to be signed soon, is unlike its predecessors in that it permits up to four billion dollars to be spent over the next six years in federal subsidies for systems now in operation. Earlier bills have paid only for construction. It may be the only benefit the oil producing nations have conferred on us, for mass transit. The plan is basic to any substantial fuel saving, and unless commuters have the alternative of riding the bus or subway, they can't be expected to drive a great deal less. Yet this necessary piece of legislation was nearly snuffed out in a domestic squabble. Remarkably, though the bill had been endorsed by the President, the Senate and leaders of both parties in the House, it could not be brought to the floor for weeks. The delay is a tribute to the power of committee chairmen. The House Public Works Committee, which drafted a nearly identical bill months before, became furious when it saw that its formulae were being "plagiarized" by another committee and grafted onto the bill approved by the Senate and urged upon Congress by the President. Senior members of Public Works reportedly threatened to withhold favors (federal public works funds) from districts whose representatives endorsed the plagiarized bill. Pressure from the White House later pried it loose.

Two important pieces of legislation that still have a fair chance of passing are the Foreign Trade Act and reform of the Sherman Antitrust Act. The antitrust bill was approved in essentially the same form by both the Senate and House. The President wants action on it before Christmas and will probably get it. It's the first of its kind likely to pass in 20 years and will increase corporate fines for violation of the Sherman Act from a maximum of $50,000 to one million dollars and raise

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the maximum prison sentence for individuals from one to three years, making the crime a felony. Delayed for months because of Russia's restrictive emigration policies, the Foreign Trade Act also appears to be on its way. It was released from the Senate Finance Committee in November after the USSR promised to let more Russian Jews emigrate. But even if the bill is approved, technical differences between the House and Senate versions will take time to smooth over, and time may run out.

One of the prickliest pieces of legislation is the strip-mining bill. Work on it began three years ago, but Senate and House conferees haven't been able to reach a compromise since they began negotiations last August. At this writing the conference remains deadlocked, indicating the bill will probably fail to pass, or pass too late to escape a pocket veto by President Ford. In general the bill would for the first time set federal standards on strip mining of government land and require states to come up with similar standards elsewhere. Mining companies would have to restore stripped areas to their original contour, and stripping would be forbidden on land that can't be reclaimed. Conference talks have snagged on how landowners should be compensated for property that overlies federally owned coal. Some argue that ranchers and other homesteaders should be guaranteed the right to hold onto their land even though the government owns the coal underneath and wants to sell it to mining companies. Others say that requiring coal operators to get written consent from these landowners will only encourage speculators to buy property that overlies coal beds and hold it out for high ransom. Even environmental groups are not of one voice on the question, because they realize that if the bill runs aground on "written consent," there will be *no* strip mine regulation and lawmakers will have to start from scratch next year.

Among the programs already said to be out of the running are national health insurance, no-fault auto insurance, a national consumer protection agency, foreign aid (an emergency extension will be substituted) and the President's ill-received energy-economic package. One that has shown unexpected vigor in the last two weeks, however, is tax reform. House Ways and Means, chaired by Rep. Wilbur Mills (D, Ark.), suddenly after the election reported out a piece of a bill the committee has been working on for more than a year. It would, among other things, phase out the oil depletion allowance, impose a windfall profits tax, and give a tax break to individuals earning less than $1600. If it passes the House it must still run the gauntlet of the Senate Finance Committee, chaired by Russell Long (D, La.), a champion of independent oil and, *ipse dixit*, of the depletion allowance. An oil tax bill that suits him probably would not suit his fellow committeemen—Mondale, Ribicoff and Nelson.

Food for Whom?

Secretary Butz says that limited agricultural supplies and inflation preclude increasing the amount of US food for the world's hungry by a million tons, as recommended by Sens. Humphrey, Clark and McGovern. If that is true, which we doubt, why not reorder the priorities of our giving: to each according to his need?

Time magazine reports that "nearly half a billion people are suffering from some form of hunger; ten thousand of them die of starvation each week in Africa, Asia and Latin America." It is estimated that in Bangladesh, between 50,000 and 100,000 have died since August as a result of famine. The US has promised that country $53.5 million worth of food so far this fiscal year. By contrast the administration has contracted to send three times as much to Indochina ($82.4 million), Egypt ($68.1 million) and Chile ($17.1 million). This aid is officially designated as "security supporting assistance." In 1973 South Vietnam *exported* 50,000 metric tons of rice.

The Agency for International Development in its 1975 budget presentations to Congress notes that in Sahel "an estimated 100,000 people have died from drought-related causes and approximately six million people have been affected." And it says of Bangladesh, "it is estimated that one-half of the total population suffers from protein and caloric malnutrition [which] takes a tragic toll of life among the young." Sahel and Bangladesh combined this year got $120 million worth of US food. Four times that amount went to South Vietnam and Cambodia, primarily to generate local currencies to bolster the Thieu and Lon Nol war efforts. Food for Peace shipments to Indochina went up by 250 percent this year, food aid for Bangladesh went down from an original request to Congress of $66.3 million to $41.4 million. Cambodia's seven million people received nearly five times as much food aid as 75 million Bengalis.

99.8 percent of the Food for Peace delivered to South Vietnam came under "Title I," not "Title II"—humanitarian aid. That Title I food was placed on the open market, which did little for the destitute. Similarly in Cambodia, Title I food ($194.2 million in 1973) was imported by local Chinese merchants who paid the equivalent in local currency to the Lon Nol government for use in paying troops and meeting other war expenses. And despite that aid, a survey of one refugee camp in Cambodia found 31 percent of the children under six suffering from "severe malnutrition," and over 38 percent from "moderate malnutrition." Had the administration chosen to reroute the 752,009 tons of rice and wheat that went to Indochina last year to areas like Sahel or Bangladesh, or stockpiled them for possible emergencies, the food would have been sufficient to sustain four million people for a year at

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500 grams a day per person.

Congress has been taking a look at this lopsided arrangement and there may be some changes. It has already limited the amount of fertilizer that may be shipped to South Vietnam to $85 million, and the Senate has put a ceiling of $125 million on Food for Peace shipments to South Vietnam. A group of former government officials, including former Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Warnke, recently condemned excessive food shipments to Indochina and called on the President "to declare as national policy that henceforth humanitarian, not military or political considerations will determine priorities for the distribution of food aid." As matters now stand, however, 26.6 percent of the administration's Food for Peace budget is earmarked for Indochina.

Rhodes Going Nowhere

John Rhodes, minority leader in the House of Representatives, expresses orthodox Republican sentiment when he states that overambitious federal spending is responsible for our economic miseries and that if the country is going to get better, the government is going to have to tighten its belt. But where would the squeeze be felt? Judging from Rep. Rhodes' voting record, he would not squeeze the defense establishment, though it eats up enormous resources, including energy, produces little that can be consumed, and is in excess of what deterrence requires. George Kennan recently referred to this when he told the Senate Foreign Relations committee that "the immense size of the Defense budget and the inordinate role that defense spending has come to play in our national economy have grown to have a distorting effect on national policy . . . Our whole governmental system is militarily topheavy."

How would arresting the increase in federal spending and restraining the growth of the monetary supply (Rep. Rhodes' prescription) counter such trends as these: unemployment up from 4,100,000 in October, '73 to 5,513,000 in November of this year, and sure to go higher this month; unemployment among blacks and other minority races running at 10.9 percent and 16.9 percent among teenagers; a drop in the Dow Jones average of stock prices from 1005.04 on November 20, 1972 to 609.59 the same day this year; a 50 percent increase during the past year of the number of workers collecting unemployment insurance (more than two million); the fact that only about 40 to 50 percent of the jobless normally collect such insurance, and that millions of workers now face a shortened work week; a consumer price index rise of 12.2 percent in a year and more than 50 percent over the past seven years? What would Rep. Rhodes do about Detroit, for example, where retail sales are up seven percent over the last year, but the food stamp lines, according to *The Washington Post* of November 25, "have grown so long that some are closed off at 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. so that those already waiting will have a chance to be processed by closing time in the late afternoon?" If the federal government were to play an even less aggressive part in the management of the economy, how would the nation weather either its present oil crisis or the longer range challenges of dwindling resources and the need to develop, at great expense, new sources of energy?

Are mounting personal hardships, experienced by the jobless or the aged or the sick, to be remedied by a litany of balancing or trying to balance the federal budget? How would that affect the 94,000 workers laid off by the auto industry in the week of December 18th, or the 30,000 more to be laid off by General Motors, or the additional 3000 furloughed by Ford on December 1? What is to be done about the serious slump in textiles, which in North Carolina resulted in a 6.9 percent unemployment rate during the week ending November 9? And has Mr. Rhodes some theory about how to reverse the decline in orders for durable goods —down 7.5 percent over the past 12 months? Can he tell us how to get the housing industry back on its feet? Housing starts in September were the lowest since January 1970.

These are not rhetorical questions. We know of no surefire answer that will produce instant full employment without inflation. Nor are we sure that the Democratic majority leader of the House, Carl Albert, has one. He shies away from wage, price and profits control, which now seem to us advisable, or from any mandatory fuel allocation.

But at least he is on the right track in suggesting an expanded public service employment program and an improved unemployment compensation system, more public works and public investment, and broad tax reform that would, among other things, cut excess profits of the oil industry. Mr. Rhodes has yet to come forward with anything as practical as that.

Mo Udall Takes the Plunge

Manchester, NH

Rep. Morris K. (Mo) Udall (D) of Arizona once decried the long, wearying and demeaning process by which we choose our Presidents. Shorten it, he urged. On November 23 he came to this city to take the earliest leap in recent decades—15 months before the first presidential primary. What he has sensed, correctly I be-

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lieve, is that the voters in this state and elsewhere are so disillusioned by the inability of President Ford to act decisively on anything but an unpopular pardon of his benefactor, they're anxious to get on with picking the *next* man.

He's the first member of the House since "Cactus Jack" Garner to actively seek the presidency, but he won't have the field to himself for long. At least a half dozen Democrats are expected to announce by mid-January, including Sen. Henry M. (Scoop) Jackson (D, Wash.) before the 94th Congress convenes; Sen. Lloyd M. Bentsen, Jr. (D, Tex.), who will make a final decision this month; ex-Gov. Terry Sanford of North Carolina, who has to get by the December meeting of Democrats in Kansas City first; Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia (he's building a staff); and ex-Sen. Fred R. Harris of Oklahoma (he's been campaigning for months in New Hampshire on weekends). Others are expected to look the local situation over, among them Birch Bayh and George McGovern. McGovern asked some of his old supporters in this state to "hold off" until after November (most didn't).

After making it official Udall took off for the seashore communities in the "fertile crescent"—that arc running along the coast from the Maine border and then bending inward through the Boston suburban spill in the southern reaches of the state. It's a hospitable area for Udall's kind of politics and one in which Democratic strength is steadily growing. It has strong environmental concerns. Aristotle Onassis wanted to build a refinery here but was rebuffed by the local townspeople.

Udall's Western informality spread through every crowd he encountered, putting people at ease while they tested his intellectual content (nothing folksy about that). The first comment he drew was encouraging. The scene was a restaurant in Somersworth, which is a small, working-class community with a heavy Democratic bias. He spoke softly, answering questions about the environment, and when he finished an elderly woman with an Irish brogue spoke up. "You've got an honest face and I think you'd be a nice President," she said, in tones loud enough to carry to the other tables. Her companions agreed. He hadn't run anyone else down; they liked that. Students at the University of New Hampshire in Durham, although they tend to take a harder line on the environment than Udall does, said they "felt comfortable with him." A young woman at an evening gathering in Dover attended by some 40 to 50 young professionals, including a healthy sprinkling of legislators and councilmen, summed up the group's reaction by saying, "Udall's my type." At every stop he signed up recruits, some of them key people.

Of course Udall's chances in New Hampshire are enhanced by the withdrawal of Sen. Mondale, his chief competitor in the state's progressive network. That network has had a string of local victories since Eugene McCarthy first pulled it together to challenge the Vietnam war six long years ago. Udall has picked up a good chunk of the leadership early, including national committeewoman Maria Carrier (a Muskie leader in 1972) and Merv Weston, an important McGovern figure. Udall planned his announcement before Mondale's sudden exit, but the timing couldn't have been better. Again and again people told me they had been trying to decide between the two or were leaning to Mondale but had now decided on the man from Arizona.

Important as the seashore and suburban communities are, a large part of the Democratic vote will be cast by the shoe and textile workers of Manchester, Nashua and other small industrial towns. Here Udall will have tough competition from Jackson, who has behind him the regular party organization in Manchester as well as the leadership of the state's AFL-CIO. It's when Udall makes his way down the crowded aisles of shoe factories and textile mills that the "honest face" on top of a tall, well built frame comes in handy. Udall may well strike them as "more presidential" (people whispered that he reminded them of Abe Lincoln) than the shorter, less colorful, albeit deadly serious, Jackson.

The weekend wasn't all pluses for Udall. For some he left two major questions dangling. One is whether or not he'll be able (or willing) to put together the kind of hard-headed campaign staff the Kennedys taught the opinion makers of the crowded industrial states of the East to expect. Jackson's choice of Bob Keefe, perhaps the most effective organizer in the party, to head up his campaign has sent tremors through progressive ranks on the East Coast and elsewhere. Udall will have to put aside some of his Western informality on that score. Then there's a point several businessmen raised at a cocktail party. They want a President who'll be aggressive enough to use the vast powers of the federal establishment to set the economy right. They understand jobs and profits better than scarcity of resources, of which Udall makes much. They haven't learned to live with the latter quite the way a Westerner has. But they understand power and how to use it and Udall didn't entirely convince them he does. Udall yearns to be a unifier, he won't attack his competitors. He tends to play down divisive issues lest he be trapped on his party's left as McGovern was.

New Hampshire has transformed an obscure representative few were taking that seriously into a candidate to be reckoned with. Now that he's off and running, it's up to him to persuade voters, particularly in the vote-heavy industrial states of the East and Midwest, that the politician from Tucson not only understands and can express their needs but is tough enough to do something about them.

Paul R. Wieck

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White House Watch

Ford Abroad

It was too bad that Gerald Ford and his associates couldn't put Richard Nixon behind them and out of mind when they visited Japan, South Korea and the Vladivostok area of Soviet Siberia during the new President's first venture overseas since he took the office last August. Maybe the comparative arithmetic of foreign travel set forth in fact sheets prepared for the horde of accompanying journalists—18 countries visited by Mr. Ford, 75 by Mr. Nixon—bugged them a little. But the main reasons for the note of mingled envy, recrimination and braggadocio that marred an otherwise moderately successful trip were all too plain. Disassociation from the sick and disgraced former President was deemed to be desirable and essential. Along with others who had owed a great deal to Richard Nixon, Mr. Ford was seeking it before he went abroad. And President Ford, tainted by past identification with his predecessor and diminished in public esteem by the pardon he had granted to Mr. Nixon, needed something more than a moderate success on this trip. He needed a triumph. Before he left the Soviet Union for home and after he got back to Washington, he showed that he was not above letting his people claim a triumph for him at the expense of the man who had put him in line for the presidency by appointing him to the vice presidency after it was vacated by that confessed and unpardoned felon, Spiro T. Agnew.

The claimed triumph was the agreement to negotiate a new, 10-year agreement on strategic arms limitation that the President and General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev concluded at their meeting near Vladivostok. Some aspects and oddities of the agreement to attempt agreement—and it was just that, no more—are discussed later in this report. The point made here is the way in which good, decent, modest, forbearing Gerald Ford had let certain of his associates and spokesmen denigrate his predecessor and, in the process, distort the record of strategic arms negotiation that preceded his first meeting and negotiation with Brezhnev. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger initiated the operation at the expense of his former President for the benefit of his new President. Messrs. Ford and Brezhnev were still in Vladivostok when Kissinger recalled defects of Mr. Nixon in negotiation with Brezhnev that he, the Secretary of State, had not previously been heard to mention. Kissinger said to my informant (not to me and, so far as I know, not to other reporters) that President Nixon never looked Brezhnev and other Soviet negotiators in the eye. He seemed to them to be at once shifty and arbitrary, inflexible, prone to enter negotiation with excessively rigid and structured sets of ideas that he was unwilling or reluctant to modify and that, in consequence, hindered rather than furthered effective negotiation. This was strange and ugly stuff, coming indirectly but authoritatively from an official who before, between and after the Nixon-Brezhnev summit meetings in 1972 and 1973 praised Mr. Nixon's grasp of the problems under negotiation, his skill at seeking and finding sensible compromise, and, in particular, his excellent relationship and usefully high standing with Leonid Brezhnev. True enough, Kissinger had been saying recently and said publicly during the Ford trip that Mr. Nixon's last meeting with Brezhnev in Moscow and the Crimea in July 1974 was a failure. But that, he also said, was because "in July, for a variety of reasons, things were not ripe for an agreement." After the first of Mr. Ford's encounters with Brezhnev in Vladivostok, Kissinger discovered in his new master qualities of flexibility and rapport with the Soviet leader that were suddenly held to have been lacking in Richard Nixon.

Aboard a special train transporting President Ford and his party from Vladivostok to a remote Soviet airbase, after the agreement to attempt further agreement was announced, Press Secretary Ron Nessen said: "It was something that Nixon couldn't do in three years, but Ford did it in three months. I don't know what it was—they hit it off." Aboard Air Force One, flying home to Washington with the President, Nessen showed no more awareness than he had on the train that the Vladivostok agreement, whatever it eventually amounts to, is the culmination of years of prior effort and incorporates important elements of the 1972 Nixon-Brezhnev agreements. Instead he actually raised the paeanical ante, saying: "Richard Nixon could not achieve this in five years. President Ford achieved it in three months." Still speaking of Messrs. Ford and Brezhnev, Nessen also said: "They have a similar sense of humor and that's why they got along better than Nixon and Brezhnev got along." This arrant nonsense had an interesting effect upon the White House press corps. It aroused the first expressions of sympathy for Mr. Nixon and of outrage on his (and history's) behalf that I'd heard from that company for many months. At the White House, the day after Mr. Ford returned, Nessen was asked whether the President knew about the remarks and how he reacted to them. Nessen said the remarks had been discussed with the President and "he wasn't critical."

Mr. Ford's stay in Japan was notable principally for its shortage of notable achievement and event. Here again, though in an oblique and more kindly way, the remembrance of Richard Nixon was pervasive. The principal purpose and accomplishment of the visit to Japan, in fact, were to assuage the hurts and angers that resulted from Mr. Nixon's and Henry Kissinger's failure to inform the Japanese government in advance of the US approach in 1971 toward accommodation with Communist China and from a similar failure to forewarn the Japanese government of US economic

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moves that gravely affected the Japanese economy. Mr. Nixon was gone but Kissinger was still blamed, and he bespoke a good deal of inner comfort and relief on his own part when he said in Tokyo that "perhaps the most important result of the visit—beyond any of the specifics that were discussed—has been the frankness, cordiality and completeness of our exchanges." Kissinger also perceived a parallel with the Nixon past that did not permit public mention. Everyone knew by the time Mr. Ford arrived that Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka, caught up in revelations of the personal wealth that he had accumulated during his political career, would have to resign within days after the President departed. It seemed to Kissinger that Tanaka had worked all his adult life for the eminence that he was about to lose, just as Richard Nixon had, and that in this sense both men were the central actors and victims of similar tragedies. Kissinger had thought up and coached Mr. Ford in a way around the embarrassment that the imminent fall of a disgraced Prime Minister who was also the President's host (along with the Emperor) would normally cause. It was an argument to the effect that Japanese Prime Ministers, unlike US Presidents, weren't really bosses of anything but were merely the temporarily ascendant members of a like-minded community of politicians—transient chairmen of the board, Kissinger put it, whose rise and fall made no serious difference. This theory bore little relation to the jugular realities of Japanese politics. But it appeared to comfort the President and his entourage and made it easier for journalists to concentrate upon such matters as Mr. Ford's appearance on a ceremonial occasion in ludicrously short morning trousers.

The universally accepted impression was that Mr. Ford visited Seoul, the capital of South Korea, because it was close to Japan and avoiding it would have been a grievous insult to an ally. Before he began his trip, the President was known to labor under a related and somewhat confused notion that the detour to Seoul became unavoidable when a Korean resident of Japan tried to kill President Park Chung Hee and accidentally killed Mrs. Park. Just what this had to do with Mr. Ford's itinerary I never understood; I simply report that he thought it had a good deal to do with the decision to visit Seoul. One gathers that Secretary Kissinger either originated or shared this thought. According to the official account, Presidents Park and Ford concentrated in their discussions upon what Park called "this bond of friendship, confirmed in blood" during the Korean and Vietnamese wars and upon Mr. Ford's declared intention to continue a high level of American military supply to South Korea along with the continuing and unreduced presence of American troops. The visiting reporters tended to concentrate upon President Park's notorious policy and practice of domestic repression and upon whether President Ford had any thought of making the mitigation or abandonment of this policy a condition of further American aid. Secretary Kissinger delegated to Assistant Secretary of State Philip Habib, a former ambassador to South Korea, the task of saying no more on the matter at a press conference in Seoul than that "the subject came up as part of a general discussion between the two Presidents" and that "our fundamental concern and attention has been devoted to the problems of peace and security in the peninsula." My impression, derived from other things Habib said, is that Mr. Ford actually warned President Park that the next Congress, with its increased majority of Democrats, is unlikely to sustain a high level of military and economic aid to South Korea unless the current repression and harassment of dissidents is substantially modified. But Kissinger had forbidden Habib to say so, presumably in consideration of President Park's sensitivities, and the burden of reports from Mr. Ford's press party was that he really didn't give a damn about what happened to President Park's critics and opponents.

The essence of the strategic arms agreement to seek further agreement announced at Vladivostok, Mr. Ford's last foreign stop, was that US and Soviet negotiators would try between now and a summit conference in the US next summer to figure out ways for each of the two countries to limit itself to an equal number of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles, principally meaning missiles and bombers, and also to an equal and smaller number of missiles equipped with multiple nuclear warheads. A joint statement and Kissinger said that the equal numbers to be aimed at in both categories were agreed upon at Vladivostok. Kissinger also said that President Ford and General Secretary Brezhnev agreed to withhold the numbers from publication until Mr. Ford had time to impart them to congressional leaders in Washington. The prior and subsequent shenanigans having to do with these numbers and with the overall Vladivostok discussions and agreement, rather than the arguable merits and demerits of the provisional nuclear agreement as such, occupy the remainder of this report.

Reporters on the President's homebound plane were told that the actual reason for delaying publication of the vital numbers—knowledge that intelligent judgment of the announced objectives requires—was that Mr. Ford wanted to have the presumably agreed totals in hand in a formal, signed Soviet document before he committed himself to them. The evening after he returned and before he met congressional leaders, White House reporters were told first that he would not and then that he would divulge the agreed numbers to the leaders and ask them to keep the figures secret for a few days. Senator Henry Jackson, a powerful critic of the administration's previous nuclear and strategic policy, was probably in the ball park when he guessed that the agreed overall total was around 2300 (*The New York Times* said below 2500). The determining factors, unknown at this writing, were the mix of missiles and

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bombers that each government intended to establish within the agreed totals and the size and power—"the throw-weight"—of each country's missiles.

Kissinger said last October, after a meeting in Moscow, that the prospects for a long-term agreement seemed to be good. Then he drew back in caution and was still cautious when he talked to reporters while the President's plane was landing at a Soviet airbase some 80 miles from Vladivostok. The most to be expected, he said then, was some further reduction of the differences between the two governments. The Soviet journalists and other propagandists who awaited the President's press party at a hostel on the outskirts of Vladivostok differed with and resented this estimate of the prospects when it was conveyed to them. They said much greater things were to be expected and would be realized if the President and Kissinger responded adequately to unspecified Soviet offers. Before the following dawn Kissinger was a changed statesman: he was busting out with optimism, discernibly restraining himself from predicting a major breakthrough. Within hours on that same morning, the Soviet informants were also changed—the other way. They said things were grim: the Americans had arrived with nothing in hand but obstructive objections to Soviet proposals. At around 1 pm, a Moscow journalist who is highly esteemed as a source by some of the American press party's most distinguished ornaments said he had it straight from the conference center that the arms discussion had ended in hopeless impasse.

It didn't, of course. In the late afternoon, just before the President left for home, Kissinger said the joint statement "marks the breakthrough with the SALT negotiations that we have sought to achieve in recent years and produces a very strong possibility of agreement, to be signed in 1975." His exuberant manner more than his words led some reporters to elide "strong possibility" and jump to "agreement." I didn't and don't.

John Osborne

The Future of the United Farm Workers

Chavez Against the Wall

by Peter Barnes

In April 1962 a 35-year-old organizer and former farmworker named Cesar Chavez packed his belongings, withdrew his life savings of $900, and drove with his wife and eight children to the San Joaquin Valley town of Delano. He had in mind an ambitious undertaking: to organize a union of farmworkers that would put an end to the notorious labor contracting system, secure decent wages and working conditions, and upgrade farm work into an occupation that was not a badge of inferiority. Earlier efforts to organize farmworkers—by the Wobblies at the turn of the century, by Communist-led unions in the 1930s, by AFL-CIO-backed committees in the 1950s—had all been short-lived. Strikebreakers were too numerous and strike benefits too paltry; local, state and federal officials collaborated in every conceivable way with growers; racial mistrusts kept workers divided; and all too often the organizers themselves were outsiders with little understanding of farmworkers or the peculiarities of large-scale agriculture.

Slowly, quietly, Chavez began the arduous task of explaining to farmworkers how they could benefit by joining what was then called the Farm Workers Association. After working in the fields all day, he would drive 50 or 100 miles for an evening meeting in a farmworker's home. By 1965 the FWA had a few thousand dues-paying members spread over several counties. It was not yet ready for a strike, but when a fledgling union of Filipino farmworkers called a strike against table grape growers in the Delano area, the predominantly Chicano FWA could not stand idly by. Unanimously its members voted to join the Filipinos and in so doing embark upon a struggle for union recognition and workers' rights that is still unfinished.

Today the question is whether Chavez and his union—now called the United Farm Workers of America—can finish that struggle on their own terms. In 1970, after five years of strikes and boycotts, the UFWA won its first major contracts. Three years later, the majority of growers who had signed with the UFWA switched to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. (They were able to do this without con-

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sulting their workers because the National Labor Relations Act does not apply to agriculture.) UFWA membership plummeted from about 60,000 to 12,000. New strikes and boycotts were called, but the Teamsters proved a hard group to dislodge. The press began writing the UFWA's obituary. A *New York Times* magazine cover story contended that Chavez and *La Causa* had been "devastated" in the fields by the Teamsters. In the cities, where boycott support is crucial, liberals (said the *Times*) were tired of Chavez' seemingly endless appeals for sacrifice, and many wondered what difference it made whether farmworkers were represented by the UFWA or the Teamsters.

Reports of the UFWA's demise are premature. In the fields as well as the cities, the UFWA is alive and kicking. There is a good chance that UFWA-sponsored legislation providing for farm labor elections will pass the California legislature next year and be signed by Gov.-elect Edmund G. Brown, Jr. If that happens it's likely that the UFWA will win back many of the contracts lost to the Teamsters and expand into unorganized areas.

The UFWA has never been a traditional labor union; from the beginning Chavez did things differently. The union's staff was filled with idealists who worked endless hours for subsistence pay. (The standard UFWA salary, which everyone including Chavez gets, is room and board plus five dollars a week.) There was close identification with the civil rights movement and its techniques of aggressive nonviolence. There was a strong religious coloration to *La Causa* and close working relationships with church groups and clergy, especially Catholics. There was unprecedented emphasis on boycotts, since the poverty of most farmworkers and the growers' ability to import strikebreakers from Mexico, including many illegal aliens, made strikes in the field extremely difficult to sustain.

The UFWA's objectives also differed from the traditional goals of unions. It wanted all the standard things—union recognition, higher wages, fringe benefits such as health and pension plans—but it also sought to protect field workers from poisonous pesticides and to obtain such basic amenities as clean toilets and drinking water in the fields. It wanted to operate clinics, to build retirement villages and credit unions, to become a political force for farmworkers equal in clout to the American Farm Bureau Federation and the big growers. Above all it wanted to reform the agricultural system so that field workers would be something better than rented slaves.

The distinctive qualities of the UFWA accounted for both its successes and its subsequent troubles. By 1970 strikes, boycotts and threats of boycotts had won contracts for the UFWA with most major wineries, the lettuce-growing subsidiary of United Brands, the citrus-growing subsidiary of Coca-Cola, and the big table grape growers. These contracts not only raised wages of field workers substantially; they replaced the labor contracting system, under which farmworkers were pawns of the contractors who got them their jobs, with UFWA-run hiring halls. They improved sanitary facilities in the fields. They established strict rules regarding use of pesticides and generated funds with which the union opened five clinics and built a retirement village for Filipino farmworkers.

But the qualities that made these accomplishments possible, that won Chavez his following in the cities and enabled the union to outlast the tenacious opposition of growers, made it difficult for the UFWA to consolidate its gains. Organizers and picketers who were not and could not have been motivated by high salaries were sustained by a kind of Manichean outlook: the struggle by the good guys (Chavez and his supporters) against the bad guys (the growers and their allies) was what gave life meaning. The victories of 1970 required the UFWA to be both a good administrator of old contracts and a warrior for new ones; its psychology and its limited resources made it favor the latter task at the expense of the former. Growers who signed with the UFWA became more, not less, antagonistic, as much because of the UFWA's style as because of the reforms it demanded. Many growers eventually decided it was worth the agony of further strikes and boycotts to get a more cooperative union.

At the same time the union-run hiring halls, which were at the core of the UFWA's strategy for agricultural reform, proved an unpopular innovation with many field workers. For understandable reasons the hiring halls gave first priority in assigning jobs to paid-up UFWA members who had participated in strikes or boycotts; second priority went to union members who had worked longest at the ranch in question. Many workers who were low on the seniority list or just entering the labor force felt short-changed. Some who had traveled long distances with cousins and uncles were angered when the hiring halls wouldn't give jobs to their relatives, or would assign them to different ranches. (In pre-UFWA days labor contractors always had a few slots for cousins.) UFWA officials would try to explain that the apparent inequities of the hiring hall were part of the price of progress; that hiring halls would, over the long run, lead to job stability and guarantee that older workers and women—not just the strong-bodied male youths favored by contractors and growers—would be able to earn a decent living. But many workers turned away at UFWA hiring halls were not convinced and were grateful when they could find jobs at Teamster or nonunion ranches.

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters seemed ideally suited to capitalize on the weaknesses of the UFWA. The Teamsters are everything the UFWA is not—rich, politically powerful, Anglo-dominated, businesslike. While the UFWA dashes from emergency to emergency, never quite ready for what it has to do,

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always overextended, always counting on doggedness and righteousness to get it through, the Teamsters exuded a self-assured coolness. Teamster employees, from guards to public relations men, are well paid, work regular hours, and hold idealists in disdain. Teamster offices are well furnished and orderly, with punch-clocks but no "Huelga!" banners.

The Teamsters have represented cannery and packing house workers since the 1930s; their interest in representing farmworkers dates from the early 1960s. It's an oddly motivated interest, though, stemming less from concern for the welfare of farmworkers than from concern for other Teamsters and the strength of the union itself. New agricultural machines have moved many sorting and packing jobs from the sheds to the fields; the Teamsters want to keep control over those jobs. They also fear harvest-time strikes by field workers that could cause lay-offs of cannery workers and truckers. By adding farmworkers to their fold, the Teamsters hope to gain a handle on America's food supply from crop planting to supermarket delivery.

The Teamsters' notion of what an agricultural union should look like, is quite different from the UFWA's. It is not a union of, by and for Chicano and Filipino field workers that the Teamsters have in mind, but a much more traditional organization of skilled tractor drivers and machine operators, most of whom are Anglos. In a 1973 interview with Jane Yett Kiely, a graduate student conducting a Safeway-commissioned study of the lettuce industry, Einar Mohn, then director of the Western Conference of Teamsters, expounded on this vision. "I'm not sure how effective a union can be when it is composed of Mexican-Americans and Mexican nationals with temporary visas. Maybe as agriculture becomes more sophisticated and more mechanized, with fewer transients, fewer green carders, and as jobs become more attractive to whites, then we can build a regular union that can have structure, that can negotiate from strength and have membership participation."

Though wages at Teamster ranches are comparable to, and occasionally a few pennies higher than wages at UFWA ranches (roughly $2.50 an hour for field work), there are vital differences between the contracts negotiated by the two unions. The UFWA's outline in detail which pesticides can be used and how much reentry time must be allowed after spraying; the Teamsters' simply call for adherence to state and federal laws. (The difference, according to an observer, is that "the UFWA enforces its pesticide provisions with a missionary zeal; no one enforces state and federal laws.") Both contracts require growers to contribute to health and pension funds, but the worker eligibility requirements differ. To qualify for Teamster health benefits a farmworker must have worked 80 hours during the preceding month for the same employer. Under the UFWA's health plan, coverage extends to any worker who, along with other members of his or her immediate family, logs a combined total of 50 hours of work over the preceding three months, or 150 hours over the preceding nine months, with any grower under UFWA contract. The UFWA health plan, in other words, is designed for seasonal workers and migrants; the Teamsters' is limited to a small number of steady employees.

Until recently the Teamster approach to "organizing" field workers was to go directly to growers to get union shop contracts. If the UFWA then struck, the Teamsters would send guards to protect "their" workers from the pickets. Since early last year the Teamsters have been trying to improve their rapport with field workers. Before signing contracts with growers they first send organizers into the fields. Contracts are printed in Spanish as well as English; there is a Teamster farmworker newspaper, also published in two languages. Seven Teamster field offices handle workers' grievances and claims. A new farmworkers local, headquartered in Salinas, is directed by a Chicano who formerly headed a cannery workers local. All this led many observers to believe that the Teamsters were well on their way to winning acceptance among Chicano field workers. The Teamsters *have* gained ground, but they are beset with internal troubles that are undercutting their organizing efforts. Last month, in what was officially described as an economy move, the Teamsters fired 26 staff members of the farmworkers local, including Cono Macias, their top Fresno area organizer, and Beverly Freitas, director of the local's service division. Macias had been critical of the appointment of Ralph Cotner to head the Teamsters' statewide farmworker organizing drive. He charged that Cotner "is anti-Mexican, make no bones about that," and said his superiors "made it clear they were not going to let a goddamned Mexican take over this project." Macias added that Teamster leaders want to break up the farmworkers local because "it has grown too much and they fear the power of the workers."

The Teamsters do nevertheless have staying power. "Unless the UFWA can get its contracts back soon," says a Salinas Valley attorney who has watched the farm labor situation for many years, "the Teamsters will sew things up. The UFWA can't win a long war of attrition."

There are two ways the UFWA might get those contracts, however: by inflicting intolerable losses on growers through the boycott, or by winning elections brought about by new California legislation. (The UFWA does not want federal legislation unless it is similar to the original Wagner Act, and that kind of legislation is unlikely to get through Congress and past President Ford.) The boycott probably won't succeed against lettuce growers; it has a better chance against grape growers and the Gallo wine company. "The staff and sophistication of the boycott operation

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is far superior to what it was in 1968 and 1969," says Fred Ross, Jr., northern California boycott coordinator. "There are 700-800 people working in the major US and Canadian cities. We are using ads and billboards, picketing supermarkets, canvassing door-to-door, speaking constantly to schools, churches and labor groups. The whole operation raises enough money to be self-supporting."

The impact of the boycott is difficult to judge. Department of Agriculture figures indicate that seven million unsold boxes of table grapes were in cold storage as of mid-October, about twice the number in storage at the height of the successful 1969 boycott. But growers say the high storage figures are due to an unusually large crop this year, and they claim to be doing well in terms of both price and sales volume. Gallo sales are down five percent, according to *The Wall Street Journal*, though Gallo itself claims they're up. Whatever the actual sales figures, both Gallo and the grape growers appear willing to suffer some diminishment of profits if that will get the UFWA out of their hair. A quick sweeping UFWA victory via the boycott therefore seems unlikely.

Pro-union farm labor legislation is, however, a strong possibility. For the past eight years the UFWA has had to contend with a Reagan administration in California; four times the state legislature passed, and four times Reagan vetoed, a simple measure extending state unemployment compensation to agricultural workers. Most of the UFWA's political energies were spent opposing legislation drafted by the Farm Bureau, including a 1972 initiative that would have banned secondary boycotts and harvest-time strikes. Today the political climate is more congenial. Reagan will soon be gone from Sacramento; Richard Nixon, Charles Colson and other Teamster allies are gone from Washington. At the last session of the California legislature the Teamsters and the UFWA each sponsored farm labor bills. Both measures would have created a state agricultural labor relations board and required secret ballot elections upon petition by workers. The Teamster bill would have prohibited secondary boycotts, timed the labor elections so that most seasonal workers would be ineligible to vote, and divided the agricultural work force into two craft units, one for field workers and one for skilled machine operators. The UFWA bill allowed seasonal employees to vote ("The minority should not be allowed to determine the fate of the majority," argued UFWA lawyer Jerry Cohen), permitted boycotts, didn't segregate field hands into units from which they couldn't rise to higher paying jobs, and subjected existing "sweetheart" contracts to the elections requirement. In an end-of-the-session rush, a bill very close to the UFWA version passed the State Assembly but died on a procedural move in the Senate. "We lobbied with people, the Teamsters and growers lobbied with money," Cohen recalls. "When the new legislature opens in January, we'll have farmworkers all over Sacramento and boycott committees pressuring legislators from their districts. This time we'll get it through the Senate and the governor will sign it."

If an elections bill permitting seasonal workers to vote does pass the California legislature next year, UFWA leaders predict the UFWA will carry the Salinas Valley and the Delano and Arvin areas of the San Joaquin Valley, and win most but not all of the ranches in the Coachella Valley. Teamster spokesmen also voice optimism, but the evidence at the moment seems to favor the UFWA. Thus spontaneous strikes erupted this summer at tomato ranches near Stockton, lemon groves near Yuma, Arizona, a mushroom factory near San José, an apple orchard near Watsonville. The workers called in the UFWA and the UFWA, hard-pressed as it was, responded with organizers and, in Yuma, with strike benefits. In most of the strikes the UFWA won higher wages without getting a contract; more importantly it built a track record with workers that will be remembered if and when elections are held. The apple strike was particularly significant because the grower, William Buak, had previously signed a Teamster contract. When the workers, with UFWA support, struck for higher piece rates (they ultimately won an increase from $5.50 to $8.50 a bin), the Teamsters tried, but failed, to keep workers on the job.

Over the long run the UFWA will have to do more than strike, boycott and win elections; it will have to iron out kinks in the hiring hall system and show that it can run its day-to-day operations in a way that satisfies workers who aren't hard-core Chavistas. It will also have to improve relations with growers under contract. Fortunately the union seems to be learning from earlier mistakes. "They've made considerable improvements in administration," says Lionel Steinberg, the large Coachella Valley grape grower who stayed with the UFWA in 1973. "The dispatch system at the hiring hall has been streamlined. The people who run the hiring hall have a more constructive attitude—they're not so militantly anti-grower as before. We still have some problems on grievances. The ranch enforcers are like a new cop on the beat—they love to hand out the traffic tickets. But we have a new permanent arbitrator, a Methodist minister, and the arbitration procedure is working well."

When observers predict an early demise for the UFWA, they overlook one thing: Chavez and those who've stuck with him are long-distance runners. They have a vision of agriculture not shared by growers or Teamsters, a vision in which dark-skinned field workers can achieve some dignity and some control over their own lives. It's a vision that thanks to the UFWA, is closer to reality now than at any time in the long history of agricultural peonage in America. But there are miles to go.

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IRA Terrorism: No End in Sight

The bombing of two pubs in Birmingham with the killing of 19 and the wounding of 184—mainly young people—highlights the switch of IRA terrorism from Ulster, where for most Britons it is a distant bore, to England where it is becoming a mounting horror. The toll in dead, maimed, and in property destroyed mounts steadily: 250 soldiers and 1000 or more civilians killed; 4000 injured. Britain has paid $175 million for "malicious damage" alone and is weighing claims totaling $125 million more. Even Eire estimates that it has lost $500 million in diminished tourism.

It is forgotten, occasionally, that one million Irish have been permitted to enter Britain since World War II for jobs. They have settled mainly in Irish colonies around Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool and Glasgow. They pay taxes and they vote, usually Labour. This is the sea in which the now outlawed IRA swims, emerging to plant time bombs in pubs, buses and canteens, then disappearing into a tight-knit silent world. Scotland Yard's task is formidable.

What does the IRA want? Essentially this band of a few hundred Irish Catholic fanatics (from both sides of the border) wants to expel British rule from the six counties of Ulster; to cow one million Protestants who are determined to keep Ulster as British as Devon or Lancashire; to unify all Ireland by persuasion or force.

American-Irish funds, ironically, not only helped set up the IRA's ancestor, the violently nationalistic Fenian movement in Paris in the 1850s, but have also nurtured the movement ever since. Since 1969 when the current troubles began, about two million dollars have been collected through the Irish Northern Aid Committee, in the guise of relief. Department of Justice records show that in six months alone, during 1971-72, some $200,000 in relief was sent in currency to one Joseph Cahill in Dublin. Cahill is now serving a three-year jail term imposed by the Eire government for attempted arms-running.

After World War II, during which the IRA collaborated with the Germans, the movement was wracked by internal dissensions and Marxist penetration. In the mid-'50s it launched a feeble border campaign but was crushed in 1960 by Eamon de Valera, then Irish premier, who jailed 100 IRA leaders. Peace reigned until 1969. That year the civil rights movement leaped the Atlantic. Civil rights techniques, so ably mastered by American blacks, were now adopted by Ulster Catholics—for 50 years deprived of jobs, housing and voting rights. Soon the IRA began moving in, but in so doing split itself wide open. The Marxist-leaning officials, led by Cathal Goulding, wanted subversion and penetration, not violence. A faction styling itself the provisionals, led then by Rory Brady and Sean Mac Stiofain (born John Stevenson, an English Cockney), broke away: good Catholics, they opposed Marxism; Irishmen, they wanted a "bash" at the British army that had begun moving into Ulster to quell violence.

Meanwhile the Ulster Protestants, fearful of being abandoned by Britain, have also begun arming. They have discarded such moderate leaders as Brian Faulkner, the last Unionist prime minister, whose attempt to share power with Catholics early this year was wrecked in May by a massive Protestant-led general strike. The new Protestant leaders are extremists, such as the Rev. Ian Paisley, a 6 foot, 4 inch tall demagogue of extraordinary magnetism, William Craig, a soft-spoken but iron-willed politician and Harry West, a bluff, no-nonsense ex-agriculture minister. The main Protestant paramilitary defense force is the Ulster Defense Association with 50,000 members, organized in brigades all across Ulster. Another is the Ulster Volunteer Force with 4000 members. Both are said to be forming brigades in Britain.

This is not so much a religious war as a working class war. Affluent Protestants and Catholics live together amicably. It is the men in the cloth caps at the great Harland and Wolff shipyards in Belfast, the men and women in the textile mills, in the automobile plants and light industries, who are reacting savagely to Catholic militancy. One hears the same racial epithets, the same caricaturing of entire populations—lazy, shiftless, dirty, crime-ridden—that one has heard in those solid, respectable white ethnic communities in US cities about American blacks.

No one knows how it will end, not even the British, harassed with their own problems and weary of the cost—one billion dollars a year and rising steadily. The Labour government has scheduled elections this winter for a 78-member Ulster Constituent Assembly to cast about for a new system of rule. The Protestants will elect a majority but neither they nor the Catholics are in a mood to compromise.

Continuing direct British rule would probably suit most Ulsterites—Protestant and Catholic—but will the British nation carry this millstone indefinitely, especially with mounting violence in the homeland? Total integration of Ulster into Britain, urged by Paisley, seems politically unlikely; total independence, urged by Craig, seems impossible. Eighty percent of Ulster's trade is with Britain and without British subsidies Ulster would sink to the economic level of Eire.

The worst solution, but one increasingly heard now, would be a British pull-out: slow, cautious, carefully disguised—but terminal. Unquestionably bloodshed would follow. The Protestants, now a two-to-one majority in Ulster, will fight union with Ireland where they would become a one-to-four minority. And the fighting would spread not only into Eire (now fearful of a British evacuation) but also into Britain.

Benjamin Welles

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Stanley Kauffmann on theater

Equus
(Plymouth)

The Britain-on-Broadway season continues. *Equus* is by Peter Shaffer, who belongs to an English playwrights club that includes Tom Stoppard and Peter Nichols, the Latter-day League of Middle Seriousness. Shaffer is best known here for *Five Finger Exercise* and *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*, two plays that aimed heavy thematic artillery but then, like Chaplin's cannon, fired their shells only a little plopping way. *Equus* does better, but not enough.

It was first produced last year by the National Theater in London, and the American production, which is generally admirable, is based on the earlier one—the same director, one of the original two leading actors, the same costume and scene design. The setting is a low rectangular platform with low rails that have benches inside them. It's used principally as a psychiatrist's office but is obviously meant to suggest a boxing ring. Behind the platform are two small arcs of bleachers. Members of the audience occupy most of those bleacher seats, helping to form a circle with the rest of the audience in their conventional places out front; but all of the actors also sit in those seats, or near them, when they are not actually "on." The lights are mostly boxing-arena white.

So the play, which deals with a doctor and a young patient, is presented as a match between them. This is clever enough but fundamentally irrelevant—or at least no more relevant than in any analyst-patient relationship. The virtues of the production lie elsewhere.

Shaffer notes in the program and in the newly published book (*Equus and Shrivings*, Atheneum; $7.95) how he got the idea for the play. A friend told him about a shocking crime. Shaffer then "modified" it for his purposes. As he presents it, a 17-year-old boy, employed on weekends at a stable in southern England, one night blinds six horses. The magistrate before whom the boy is brought asks a psychiatrist to take the boy on. Though the play is interwoven with enacted memories and enacted fantasies, it's essentially a chronicle of that analysis: how the doctor breaks through the boy's defenses, with the aid—somewhat unwitting—of the boy's parents, and finally uncovers the reason for his barbarous act.

Since this is not a Hitchcock psycho drama, there's no reason not to reveal what is discovered. The boy's religious mother had put a picture of a flagellated Christ in his bedroom; the boy's atheist father had taken down the Christ and put up a photograph of a horse, head-on, eyes large. The boy had developed a combined religious-sexual fixation about horses (it does sound a bit like a pat Hitchcock psycho script) and used secretly to go galloping naked at night on a particular horse, having orgasms as he went. One night the girl who had got him his job in the stable took him back there. They attempted to make love, but he was impotent because he felt that the horses were watching. He frightened the girl off; then, frenetic and ashamed—more ashamed because he "betrayed" the horses than because he failed the girl—he blinded the animals who figuratively watched the act. His ability to reveal the story at last is said by the doctor to cure him, more or less, of his troubles. (Shaffer says he has had expert advice, but this conclusion seems, medically, rather neat.)

Now the author sensed, quite rightly, that this chronicle was not enough. In fact, during the first half of the play, not much more than this psychical detective story is begun, and at intermission the play seems somewhat gauzy. During the second half, texture gets laid on. Shaffer has characterized the doctor as unhappily and frigidly married, and during the second half we learn that the doctor, who is an amateur of ancient Greece and its myths and rituals, is fundamentally jealous of his patient's passion. Crippling and painful though the boy's fixation is, it's at least hot and consuming, says the doctor whose job it now is to excise the boy's passion and render him normal.

"That boy has known a passion more ferocious than I have felt in any second of my life," he tells the magistrate. He describes his life, with its three-week planned tours of Greece every year, the rest of the time spent with a woman he hasn't even kissed in six years. Bitterly he concludes: "Then in the morning I put away my books on the cultural shelf, close up the kodachrome snaps of Mount Olympus, touch my reproduction statue of Dionysus for luck—and go off to hospital to treat him for insanity."

The speech is flashily effective (like the boxing-ring gimmick), but my own reaction was: "And quite right, too. You *should* treat him. He's sick and you're a doctor, and you're well and you know it." The moment summed up for me a conviction that the doctor's jealousy was only Shaffer's fabrication—R. D. Laing diluted and ladled in to fill the dramatic vessel to the top. The original murder story had apparently struck Shaffer not only with its horror but also with its singularity, and he had tried to mine some mythic significance out of it. (Horses loom large in myth.) Then, realizing at halftime that the play was thin and the mythic addenda insufficient, he had worked in this doctor's-jealousy theme. I'm not trying to criticize telepathically or by the standard of intention but by what is given us. The doctor to whom the passionate boy is brought just happens to be passion-starved (he says) and just happens to be a devotee of the myths that the patient's case adumbrates. Neatness, neatness all the way—as when one builds from the end forward. And we are asked to believe that the one doctor to whom the magistrate will entrust the boy, the only one who has the magistrate's confidence, has faulty

(continued on page 33)

Films Worth Seeing

Amarcord. If there's such a thing as an instant classic, this is it. Fellini's exquisite, funny, ironic poem about the small town of his youth.

Antonia. A good one-hour documentary about a fine woman—Antonia Brico, the orchestral conductor who, as woman, was ahead of her time.

I. F. Stone's Weekly. Now playing some places with *Antonia*. Another good one-hour documentary about a truth-addicted journalist.

Scenes from a Marriage. Bergman cramped his six-part Swedish TV series into a somewhat ungainly bundle for the US, but much of what's in it is fine. Especially Liv Ullmann.

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Recent, Noteworthy Fiction

The King's Indian
by John Gardner
(Knopf; $8.95)

A serious case can be made for how little John Gardner resembles himself. Now he's an epic poet, now an epic novelist, now a medieval monster, now a simulated Poe or Melville. He is the latter two, and more, in this new collection of his short fiction, the title story a remarkable novella, full of marvels.

Gardner is the Lon Chaney of contemporary fiction, a writer without a personal psychography in his work. He seems sprung not from life but literature, history and ideas, a man making books with other books as a starting point, but a writer of enormous range and inventiveness. His prose is regal.

What he is is a splendid show-off. Look Ma, I'm Kafka. He is Kafka in "The Warden," a story of illusory life, which is the dominant theme of most of these stories and tales. Herr Vortrab is an assistant to the warden of a prison where men are kept in chains in dungeons, never charged with a crime, some for presumably religious heresies. Vortrab relays the warden's directions to underlings, but lately he hasn't seen the warden. He believes he hears him pacing in his office, but the warden will not respond to knocks or messages. Neither will the higher echelons of the system of justice. Gardner is not merely parodying *The Trial* and "In the Penal Colony" in this, but using their moods, their ambiguities, their bizarre ironies out of homage both to the stories and their inventor. With the theme of mute authority dictating men's destinies, Gardner does not improve on Kafka, but Kafka starts from him. Herr Vortrab finally does see the warden, in a cemetery, holding a pistol, his forehead blown open. But when the warden walks off, Herr Vortrab, uncertain of what he has seen, resumes his life as before, pretending the warden exists, not quite sure he doesn't, issuing pardons and death sentences in his name. Mute authority reigns. Illusion runs the world.

In "The Temptation of St. Ivo" the illusion overtakes an overzealous medieval monk, Brother Ivo, a genius at decorating sacred manuscripts with "zoomorphic capitals"—letters layered with designs of dragons, the phoenix, bears, birds, "coiled, unwitting in the larger design of an A or an O." Then one day Brother Nicholas invades Brother Ivo's life, accuses him of being homosexual. Is it an invitation? He hounds Ivo, tells him he has found a phoenix and intends to murder it. Ivo confesses the hounding, but his confessor says he's overworked, under a strain and should pray for perception. Does Brother Nicholas really exist? Is he really old Nick? We assume as much but the reality of his presence drives Ivo into the night forest to a rendezvous, not with the phoenix or with the devilish Nicholas, but with—ah, the shining fantasy of a repressed cloister queen—a knight errant in full armor, on horseback, clutching a sword. Ivo accepts an invitation to mount the horse, hugs the knight, smells his sweat, and they ride off together in the moonlit mist, Ivo enroute to sainthood?

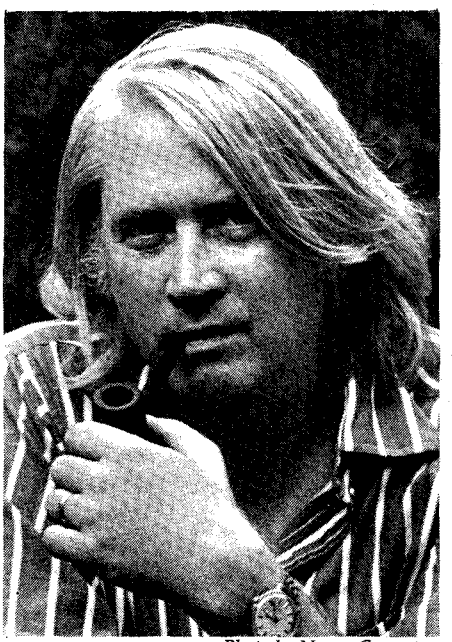

Photo by Nancy Crampton

In "The Ravages of Spring" Gardner turns to Poe for framework and tone, writing elegant literary spookery. Consider this from this most modern writer:

> *The door through which they led me . . . opened on a circular wooden stairway with a rail worn smooth by many climbings in the night, a pitch-dark room as airless as dreams of the grave. At what was perhaps the third turning, I saw light above, frail and unearthly—the lumination of the storm. It grew brighter, more ominous. I could feel the giddying sway of the tower. But at last we arrived, despite all that—came out into the world of Hunter's ungodly laboratory.*

The story is one of a mysterious house, tornado terror, a mad doctor, witchery and klones, all in support of Gardner's conclusion that "no work of evil men or devils is finally impressive compared with the vastness of the universe or the hopeful imagination," a bit of self-congratulation here, since Gardner is the most hopeful imagination at hand. He is never the tragedian. Evil folks do dastardly deeds all right, but they usually get theirs, and the goodbodies are still around at the finale.

The prime goodbody in this collection is John Napper, a painter from the story "John Napper Sailing Through The Universe." Gardner appears in this as another man named John, a poet writing an epic poem about Jason (a devilishly clever disguise: Gardner has also written an epic poem about Jason). But Gardner proves to be little more than a presence in the story, a pair of eyes to see John Napper descending into life's blackest, most despairing regions through his art, yet never ceasing to see the best side of all that life has to offer. "Marvelous" is Napper's vision of most things. Though this is a slight story which seems more like homage to a friend than competition for the other elaborate work in this collection, it suggests itself as one key to Gardner's psyche: he is not like Napper but he wishes he were.

"Pastoral Care" is a contemporary story in which Gardner, clutching the book of Jeremiah, sounds also very like John Cheever, as he plumbs suburban sophistry in a Presbyterian congregation.

Elsewhere he is also a fabulist, a teller of fairytales in three stories of Louisa, the freckle-faced, red-headed frog queen, and her husband, King Gregor ("bold King Gregor" was the name the king applied to himself, but it never caught on). These tales are amusing, fanciful, forgettable.

But unforgettable is "The King's Indian," the novella that ends the collec-

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tion. The major frame for this bravura piece is *Moby Dick*, as told not only by Melville but also Poe again, Conrad, Stevenson, Wilde, Pirandello, Hawthorne and Ingmar Bergman, among others, the amalgam suffused with the surrealist muse.

The narrator is a grizzled ancient mariner named Jonathan Upchurch, who is in heaven, recounting his story (while a sleepy angel serves drinks) to a listener who turns out to be John Gardner by name. The frame is an antique device, which Gardner uses for presumably the same reasons he uses so many obsolescent and obscure words—"some mysterious egritude of mind," "sensual, quisquos old Ovid," "in the fuliginous silence we both preferred"—to make this take a homemade museum of both language and literature.

The narrator and Gardner are finally an intrusion in the tale, not because of the device but because of Gardner's explanation just before the story's last gasp. He says that "with the help of Poe and Melville and many another man" he wrote this book, filled with doubts. But he adds that the book "is not a toy but a queer, cranky monument, a collage: a celebration of all literature and life; an environmental sculpture, a funeral crypt."

(Did he want to bury Melville? Perhaps. Be done with such an impossible hero once and for all.)

But these final lines are merely Gardner's uncertainty about what he had sculpted. He is a worrier, trying to avoid the judgment of others in advance. Will they really say he stole from Melville? How could they not? But will they know the theft had a purpose: flattering that grand spook with abject homage? How could he imagine they wouldn't know and approve?

The tale is so outlandish, so full of magic and the occult, so brimming with fraudulent visions and deceptive symbols and conversations with the Holy Ghost and hoaxes and illusions and the most outrageous coincidences, that it instantly explains to potentially miffed Melvilleans that Gardner is not propagating borrowed wisdom but only humble story. His tale of Jonathan Upchurch—a youth mesmerized by the magician Flint and his strange daughter Miranda, then robbed by pirates, fingered by nature, rescued by that doomed whaling ship, the *Jerusalem* (carrying a crew of dead men and slaves and commanded by Captain Dirge) and then damnedly destined to ride out the voyage's lunacy and villainy and murder and deception and illusion on the grandest possible scale—all this is done with such verve and fraudulence and with such an outlandish concatenation of improbabilities (ventriloquists, a spontaneously combustive man, ghost ships, angel birds) that no one could possibly accuse Gardner of venal literary piracy, only of joyful trickery.

Even the wisdom he does propagate between segments of his narrative is itself suspect, transplanted to that mystical whaler from Gardner's own overflowing rhetoric bank in order to give us yet another illusion—that this story means something. Melvillean rhetoric must mean something mustn't it?

No.

Only the plot of this tale matters, standing as it does for that profoundest of human truths: that life is one goddamn thing after another. All other interpretations of this work are illusory. And if you believe that we can get on with the story.

William Kennedy

WILLIAM KENNEDY *is author of a new novel to be published soon by Coward, McCann & Geoghegan.*

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Myron: A Novel by Gore Vidal

(Random House; $6.95)

Gore Vidal is nobody's dummy, and he knows as well as you and I do that sequels have a sorry reputation in our culture: the jerks ate it up the first time, they'll eat it up again, says the huckster on the way to the bank. We are more likely to think of *Airport 1975* or *The Godfather II* when a sequel appears than of the occasional serious attempts like *Rabbit Redux*. Is our Novelist as Aristocrat selling out on his Muse or could he just not help himself? Was the allure of America's first transsexual hero/heroine too much to resist?

The more honorable explanation seems to me the likelier one. Vidal is a rare and happy example of the writer who is both a genuine artist and a phenomenal commercial success. He's full of surprises, moving in the last decade from *Julian* and *Washington, D.C.* to *Myra Breckinridge* without missing a beat, then *Burr* (which was nominated for the National Book Award) and *Homage to Daniel Shays: Collected Essays*—which reminds us again of Vidal's brilliance as a polemicist—and now, back to *Myron*. (I've conveniently omitted several titles, including the awful *Two Sisters*.) It's not the progress of an opportunist but of an unpredictable man whose curiosity is as many-sided as his talent.

It had been a long time since the scandalous *The City and the Pillar* (although a revised version was published in the '60s), and Vidal seemed to be getting ever more serious and responsible, with a solid inquiry into the origins of Christianity, a sober look at the vagaries of power in our empire's capital. But then *Myra Breckinridge* burst onto the scene, and many thought Vidal had taken leave of his senses. It seemed to them neither serious nor responsible, a smutty joke at best, more alarmingly and more likely, evidence of some kind of kinky aberration. According to this scenario, the essays and *Burr* signaled a recovery of sanity and purpose, of health. Now, with *Myron*, he would seem to have suffered a relapse.

Yet there are those readers and critics (and I'm among them) who reject such a theory about *Myra Breckinridge* and who find it instead Vidal's best book. Like the historical novels and *Washington, D.C.*, it offers an astringent and cheerless vision which has at its center

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a meditation on power and its misuse. The terms of power in *MB* are primarily sexual (which is what the feminists have been telling us all along), and Myra is a kind of Marquise de Sade, fulminating against the tyranny of Man and his sidekick Nature. Her mind is a wondrous stew of ideas about sexual roles, definitions of femininity and masculinity, the part movies have played in arriving at those definitions, and the relationship of all of these notions to our poor planet's most desperate problem, overpopulation. With great wit and malice, Vidal sweeps across the national landscape, blithely slaughtering one sacred cow after another and offending almost everybody. Most significantly, though, Myra emerges—Great Mother, creatrix of the New World, a curious combination of Candy Darling and Eleanor Roosevelt—to join Isabel Archer, Sister Carrie, and Daisy Buchanan, on her own pedestal in the pantheon of American literary goddesses. She may be found behind locked doors, like a Pompeian naughtiness in the museum at Naples, but she has *made* it.

Vidal might (should) have been satisfied, but he has obviously become Myra's thrall and I suppose we can look forward to periodic epiphanies. There is no *necessity* for them: goddesses don't change (unlike mortals like Rabbit Angstrom, who age, learn more, suffer more), and mere humans like the tyrannical Myron (with his all-American wife and life in Van Nuys) can't keep a good girl down. It's still a pleasure to observe the erratic but 17-jewel movement of Myra's logic (not unlike that of William Buckley, Vidal has said elsewhere): saving the world from self-annihilation and keeping MGM from going in the red are Myra's twin projects, and she finally convinces us the two are really one. Vidal's encyclopedic knowledge of B-movies from the '40s and '50s still inspires awe, and we are once again indebted to Vidal for his continuing exposure of what has happened to language and expression. One of Myron's snakelike sentences, glittering with every cliché the Silent Majority paradoxically never ceases uttering, is worth any number of sermons on the decline of the Republic.

But Myra's catechumens will be disappointed with her new adversaries and allies. There was something *mythic* (as Myra might have said) about Buck Loner, Rusty, Mary Ann, Letitia, Myra's doctor—a true MGM war-movie cross section of national types. The collection of souls who find themselves transported through their TV sets into a 1948 movie called *Siren of Babylon* is surprisingly colorless and lumpish—Mr. Williams, Maude the hairdresser, Mrs. C. Y. Bowles—but then I may be missing some of the *clefs* to this *roman*. I didn't miss the real identity of the cook Whittaker Kaiser, but another savaging of Mailer seems gratuitious after Vidal's celebrated essay, "Women's Liberation Meets Miller-Mailer-Manson Man."

The plot is *very* complicated, what with all the H. G. Wells-type time machine tactics, climaxing, if that is the right word, in Myra's *becoming* Maria Montez. A pretty conceit, yet it masks what may be Vidal's real problem: that he recognizes what the reader has learned, sadly—that Myra drives her points home too often (!), she explains too much, she repeats herself, she blithers. Even a goddess, alas, can become something of a bore. The lesson is, I guess, that a second coming may turn out to be a big letdown.

James Boatwright

JAMES BOATWRIGHT *is editor of the literary magazine,* Shenandoah.

The Glory of the Hummingbird by Peter De Vries

(Little, Brown; $6.95)

As an ardent admirer of Thurber, White, Gibbs and the other great *New Yorker* humorists, I confess with some embarrassment that until this review assignment came along I had read scarcely a line by Peter De Vries, who seems generally regarded as heir to their tradition. Perhaps that is because *The New Yorker* is more distinguished now for its reportage, its sportswriting and its criticism than for its humor; perhaps it is because I had some lurking fear that De Vries would prove the equal of the masters, and thus elbow them out of the front row in my pantheon.

For whatever the reason I passed him by. Now, having read him, I can understand and appreciate the popularity he enjoys—but still, for me, Thurber, White and Gibbs remain firmly entrenched in their first-rank positions. De Vries appears, on the basis of this one novel (one which, according to other reviewers, is among his best), to

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Excerpts from this book appeared in *The New Yorker* and *The Washington Post.*

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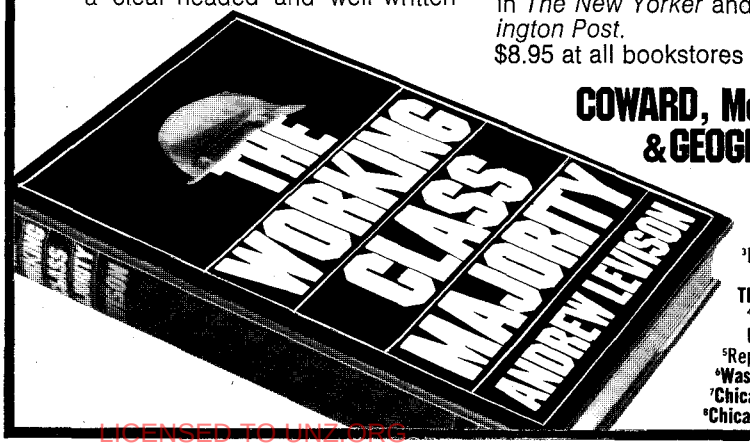

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[1]Publishers Weekly
[2]John Kenneth Galbraith
[3]Michael Harrington, author of The Other America
[4]Irving Louis Horowitz, Rutgers University
[5]Rep. Richard Bolling
[6]Washington Monthly
[7]Chicago Tribune
[8]Chicago Sun-Times

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be an ingenious and somewhat facile writer—enormously skilled at puns and one-liners, but rather lacking in the depth that characterizes the great humorists. At the risk of being facile myself, it seems to me that De Vries is to Thurber as Bob Hope is to Elaine May.

De Vries here takes both his title and his subject from T. S. Eliot: the human desire to "glitter with the glory of the hummingbird," to be, in De Vries' words, "counted one of the Beautiful People." The person infected with this all-too-common itch is a young Midwesterner named Jim Tickler. He has a vague desire to be a writer (when we first meet him he is laboring on a novel called *Munching on Mrs. Dalrymple*), but his true talents lie in other directions: he has a prodigious memory for trivia—literary, biblical, musical or what have you—and a positive genius for being on hand to seize the main chance.

He is, in other words, particularly and peculiarly outfitted for success in the world of advertising, PR, the media—a world to which he gains access by marriage to Amy Wintermoots, the daughter of a Chicago market-counseling magnate. Simply by being in the right place at the right time, he establishes himself as the fair-haired boy, always quick to come forth with catchy names for the hot dogs, cereals and other delicacies his father-in-law's clients are selling.

Eventually in the course of his duties, he becomes a contestant on a quiz show with a vast national following. He reels off success after success, rising to so high a peak of celebrity that he is invited to a reception at the Nixon White House. But then word leaks out that the show is rigged; Jim, who has opportunistically if guiltily gone along with the ruse, is ruined—at least for the moment. The glittering glory of the hummingbird proves both elusive and ephemeral.

There is, of course, a moral or two in all of this. Appearing as it does in the age of Watergate, *The Glory of the Hummingbird* is determinedly topical: a tale for our times and all that. There are few things as shortlived, however, as political satire: is anyone still reading Philip Roth's *Our Gang*, or listening to Mort Sahl's late-'50s record albums? Once Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew have passed, mercifully, from the center of the national consciousness, a good deal in this novel is going to seem dated.

The reason to read De Vries, it seems to me, is neither for his moral (no matter how engagingly or impudently presented) nor for his plot (which creaks), but for his wickedly sharp powers of observation. When it comes to defining the tiniest details of the human comedy, De Vries *does* rank with his predecessors. Here are a couple of cases in point:

> *. . . I found myself talking to a very toothsome woman in early middle age, one of those who give quick notice, almost helplessly instantaneous, of an irrepressible need to talk sex.*

Or:

> *Trotter was born to the role, as one of an Eastern family with roots deep in the Colonial American past and a pedigree loaded with scholars, judges, learned divines, poets and other intellectuals. Charming, boyish, with a most engagingly open grin, able, as one heard, to converse from scratch on any number of subjects, now wined and dined and photographed and interviewed to a fare-thee-well, sauntering into the best restaurants in clothes tailored to a gnat's eyebrow for what is known as casual elegance, he—well, glittered with the glory of the hummingbird. He was a sprig of such aristocracy as we have.*

Social pretense, whether inherited or acquired, stands not a chance under De Vries' scrutiny: he knocks off targets with the unerring accuracy of a penny-arcade marksman. Freudianism, consumerism, merchandising, puritanism, do-goodism—whatever he sets sight on, he knocks over.

Still what he has come up with here is far less a sustained piece of fiction than a succession of gags. Almost all of them are funny, and for humor such as this we should be grateful. I have detected, however, in reviews of this and earlier De Vries, a tendency to credit him with more than is really there. It is not enough to score a series of bulls'-eyes; they have to add up to a more coherent whole than they do in *The Glory of the Hummingbird.*

Jonathan Yardley

JONATHAN YARDLEY *is book editor of* The Miami Herald.

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Tigers Are Better Looking by Jean Rhys

(Harper & Row; $6.95)

In Jean Rhys' four early novels, all published before World War II and now being reissued to great critical praise, the same story is repeated, each time with greater depth and technical assurance. Rhys' characters—Marya Zelli of *Quartet*, Julia Martin of *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie*, Anna Morgan of *Voyage in the Dark* and Sasha Jansen of *Good Morning, Midnight*—are, as A. Alvarez and Francis Wyndham have shown, a composite, the same woman at various stages of physical and psychological development.

In the first novel, *Quartet*, Marya Zelli, penniless in Paris after the imprisonment of her poet-husband, drifts into an affair with the older, Anglo-Germanic H. J. Heidler, encouraged by the annoyingly understanding Mrs. Heidler. Stephan Zelli is released from prison, he leaves Marya who is now in love with Heidler, who no longer desires *her*. Events tend toward melodrama, Rhys treats them melodramatically, especially the final scene. Here she had not mastered her most precious resource—the

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beauty of implication.

The Mr. Mackenzie mentioned in the title of Jean Rhys' second novel is Heidler in different guise. Grown weary of his mistress, Mackenzie pays Julia Martin, in small weekly doses, to leave him be. But when the money stops, Julia is forced to return to England, witness her mother's death (which haunts her long after), fall into a purposeless affair due to lack of funds, and then return to Paris, penniless, a woman whose single asset for survival, her beauty, is failing her. The last scene is the most telling. Julia, seated at a sidewalk café sipping a Pernod courtesy of the ubiquitous Mr. Mackenzie, looks about. "The street was cool and full of grey shadows. Lights were beginning to come out in the cafés. It was the hour between dog and wolf, as they say." The last line marks an awareness of the abyss, implying depths that both Jean Rhys and Julia Martin have avoided.

The next two books are variations on this frightening, necessary image. *Voyage in the Dark* tells us how Marya and Julia came to be. The character's name this time around is Anna Morgan. She is 19, a chorus girl in a musical touring the English provinces. Picked up one drab cold day by Walter Jeffries who is at first kind but loses interest, the embittered Anna tries prostitution, only to become pregnant. This is familiar Rhys territory—except that here the heroine has a past: Anna's youth was spent on an unspecified West Indian island, and her warm lush memories of childhood are juxtaposed to the harsh English climate (especially in the abortion scene that ends the novel).

But it is in *Good Morning, Midnight* that Rhys' vision is clearest. To this point, the power of her prose was its ability to project the stingingly witty attitudes, the singular voice, of her characters. Yet the third-person narration of the first three novels was not a complete success. The focus wavered, and the customary distance of an omniscient technique staved off the truth. *Good Morning, Midnight*, in its first-person narration, literally and figuratively embraces the abyss.

Sasha Jansen has returned to Paris, her pockets replenished with francs. A friend has fished her out of a dingy alcoholic's heaven in London and sent her across the channel. But the Rhys character, now in her 40s, cannot cope as well. Sasha is picked up by an attractive young man, a gigolo, and knowing that he thinks she is rich (she still clings to her ratty fur coat), she decides

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to avenge the male sex. But she has met her match in this fellow, and the sparring becomes a deadly, brilliantly executed summation of all that came before it. Sex, in this neo-Jacobean finale, is the only weapon left.

These four books are like separate panels in a narrowly confined, coldly etched landscape painting. Rhys' women move from place to place, making pilgrimages toward warmth: their histories can be read in the succession of barren rooms they briefly occupy. The weather, the wind, and sun especially, are barometers of their inner lives. Money is the stickler; with it these women are sporadically happy, for it postpones hunger, buys coal for the fire. Without it their nails sharpen and the hour between the dog and wolf is no longer confined to the end of the day.

Rhys' short stories provide connective tissue for her four novels, filling in gaps in the ongoing saga. Not merely minor pieces, they are important additions. The first eight tales in *Tigers Are Better Looking* were previously published as *Tigers*, etc. in England in 1968; they were written after *Good Morning, Midnight* during her "underground period." The remaining nine were chosen from the 22 "sketches and studies of present-day Bohemian Paris" that comprised Jean Rhys' first work, *The Left Bank*, published in 1928.

The last nine stories are less accomplished and give the collection an anticlimactic finish. Still, these glimpses of left-bank existence are directly in line with Jean Rhys' mature work. The problem is one of focus. The basic materials are at hand, but the distinctive viewpoint has not been fully materialized. The women are spectators not participants. Except for "Hunger," a controlled, malicious, horrifying discourse on not eating for days, the reader is far from the center of the experience. But familiar faces arise: Miss Bruce, the portrait painter of "Illusion," might be an earlier version of Marya Zelli's friend, Esther De Solla, of *Quartet*. And Marya, on one of her prison visits to her husband, might have witnessed the scene in "From a French Prison."

The oddest, most illuminating of these early works is "Mixing Cocktails." A young girl lying in a hammock on the verandah of her island home dreams a dream for each part of the day:

> *A very short dream, the morning dream—mostly about what one would do with the endless blue day. One would bathe in the pool . . .*
> *The midday dream was languid too—vague, tinged with melancholy as one stared at the hard, blue, blue sky . . . So soon does one learn the bitter lesson that humanity is never content just to differ from you and let it go at that. Never. They must interfere, actively and grimly, between your thoughts and yourself . . .*
> *The afternoon dream is a materialistic one . . . It is of the days when one shall be plump and beautiful instead of pale and thin . . . when one will wear sweeping dresses and feathered hats and put gloves on with ease and delight . . . And of course, of one's marriage . . . Vague, that.*

And with night comes only the mad moon and the chill wind. These dreams map out the desires and fates of Jean Rhys' later characters (including the less likely Antoinette Cosway of *Wide Sargasso Sea*).

But it is the first eight stories that matter most. The title of the collection, we are told by the jacket copy, "comes from the opinion which many of Jean Rhys' characters share, that respectable people are alarming as tigers, but 'tigers are better-looking, aren't they?' " It's a wicked, all-purpose title, deadly serious in its humorous approach to social position. From the first paragraphs of "Till September Petronella" we are in familiar territory. The wind is "warm and kind not spiteful" but Petronella's room still depresses her. She wishes she were more like Estelle, a French girl, who has "everything so cut-and-dried," who walks "the tightrope so beautifully." Petronella is told by her sometime-lover how to achieve this balance. "Take my advice and grow another skin or two and sharpen your claws before it's too late." Men are deadly enemies; they must be approached with caution. The right spring must be touched "before the sneering expression will go out of their eyes and the sneering sound out of their voices." They offer only a nameless future sometime in September.

It's not much better for the other women in these stories. Inez of "Outside the Machine," the best story in the collection, precisely states the outsider's case. Entering the hospital for surgery, she feels alienated from the other women in the ward:

> *They moved about surely and quickly. They did everything in an impersonal way. They were like parts of a machine, she thought, that was working smoothly. The women in the beds bobbed up and down and in and out. They were parts of a machine. They had a strength, a certainty, because all their lives they had belonged to the machine and worked smoothly, in and out, just as they were told. Even if the machine got out of control, even if they went mad, they would still work in and out, just as they were told, whirling smoothly, faster and faster, to destruction.*

Inez, because of her sympathy for a Mrs. Murphy who tries to kill herself, is "outside the machine." The wish for death, its comfort, is forbidden territory to Inez' bedmates. But Inez, like Teresa, of the excellent "A Solid House," feels used-up, dead. When one is dead, one feels no insults or caresses. And like the young girl in "The Sound of the River," the persistent emotion is fear, dead nameless fear.

Perhaps I have made this collection sound limited in scope and repetitous in manner. It is not. It is acidly humorous and more varied in technique than one would imagine. Jean Rhys has found new ways to tell her basic story. Much of what she first did in the '20s and '30s has become routine fare in present-day fiction, so that her works may not seem so remarkable to us now; a historical perspective is a prerequisite in evaluating this exceptional artist. The publication of *Tigers Are Better Looking* will be an important part of this process.

Robert Leiter

ROBERT LEITER *is a free-lance writer and critic living in Philadelphia. His work has appeared in* Nation, Commonweal *and* Film Heritage.

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Manual Labor
by Frederick Busch

(New Directions; $8.50, $3.95 paper)

The first paragraph—indeed the first phrase—of Frederick Busch's second novel, *Manual Labor,* presents a nearly insuperable obstacle to our reading on:

> *After I died they moved from Massachusetts and they bought a house and acres of land in New Hampshire where they rose early and worked all day at projects with their hands.*

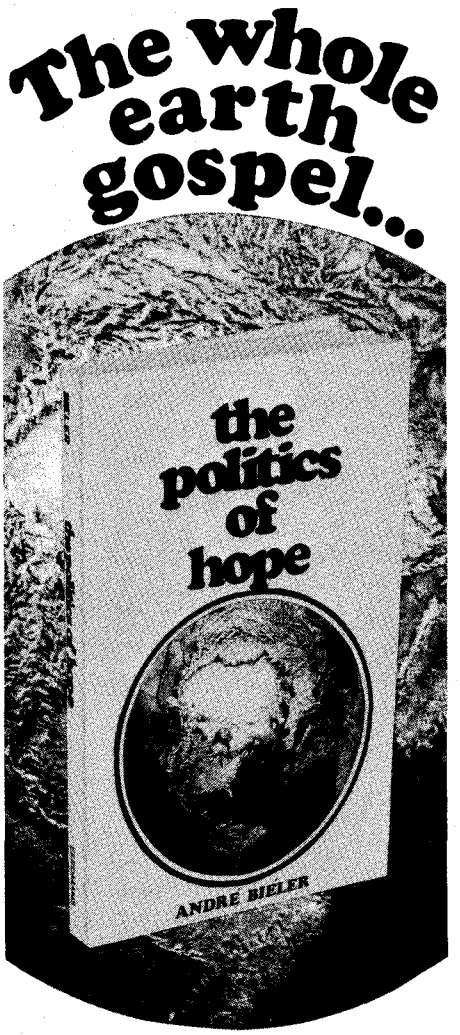
As if to test the tensile strength of our tolerance, the narrator's "tall, blond" father observes: "You forget with your hands"; and his (or its) "dark snaky" mother replies: "Sometimes you forget things for a while when you do nearly anything at all. Aren't you the one they elected president of all the romantics over six feet tall?" "Yes," says the president of tall romantics, "quietly." "This is a romance," says the bled-away fetus, the boy that they lost in the middle of month nine after nine years of marriage, preparing us for the tale which he is about to help unfold. "I am the boy who died, the voice of romance, and these are some of the dreams I have witnessed in the actual world." Although Mother has come to the north country with a "new fetus in her flat belly," we are spared its voice: by any reckoning one sentient, percipient, sententious, poetical fetal narrator is sufficient unto any romance.

In the beginning is the end: before the Sorensons are permitted to glimpse the dawning of a new day, they will know all manner of catastrophe—a second, final miscarriage; the loss of his thumb in an accident; her near-madness and the near-dissolution of their marriage; the failure of their enterprise in New Hampshire. But somehow they will transcend all this (though exactly how or why we never know, save that the preconceived design of the novel requires it and the author says so), for this is a romance, and in a romance protagonists . . . well, protagonists transcend circumstances that would devastate ordinary mortals less well protected by nurturing authors.

Now a writer takes an awful chance when he invokes a fetal narrator. Making all possible allowances in the name of goodwill, conceding almost everything to "romance" and its loose, commodious conventions, the besieged mind refuses assent. To make matters worse, not only is the idea unacceptable, it is unnecessary. Nothing comes of it—no resonance, no poignancy, no sense of loss, of waste, of anguish, no added perspective, no special insight or knowledge, only the foolish put-upon reviewer's sense of absurdity that this should need saying, that a fetus, however advanced in term, makes for one hell of an embarrassing narrator.

Such tale as there is can be simply enough related. The narration is deployed in roughly equal parts between two voices, hers and his (or three, if you include its)—the stream of their consciousness, hers in the form of a "letter" to her mother which is not intended for the mails, but only as a means of disgorging herself of her torments, and his as a kind of journal. Both the "letter" and the journal are immensely self-conscious; she's vaguely "artistic," he's an aspiring poet, and both strive for literary effect, both of them continuously aware of themselves as engaged in the act of composition, of "writing." The agonized, lurid turbulence of her "letter" with its endless repetitions and variations, its moist glandular biologizing, owes far more to merely literary, attitudinizing madness than to the authentic inner life of a fully created character. Generally, he is merely boring when not fatuous, energetic only in his descriptions of the processes by which dilapidated houses may be restored and renovated—only, that is, when he's writing a handbook of "manual labor." He, too, is "literary" in the invidious sense: manual labor as spiritual healing, that odd romantic notion.

Everything is given, nothing revealed. Everything has its source in literary conceit smuggled in from the presumed American romantic tradition. They carry the shattered fragments of their lives from New Hampshire to the Maine coast, the edge of America, and with nothing remaining and nowhere else to go set about assembling and building. "And now we're what we started with," he tells his journal, "we're the entire dynasty we began. It's worth so many poems, I keep thinking. It's worth one long one: an epic, a domestic epic, yes, the whole world acted out in one little family, damaged and patched like our house." These heroic, posturing assertions bear only a notional relation to the book, which amounts to a small, bad "poem"; and its actual scale is best demonstrated by the inane line: "Which was more than enough, so I said: 'What



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gives, babe?' "

Nothing gives. Words clog all passages; events are never permitted to happen, even the purportedly significant one of a brief, nasty, arbitrary, inconsequential, adulterous bout. In a rigged, wildly improbable and prevailingly silly dénouement and climax the world bursts in upon their isolation in the form of a fugitive government lawyer, literally a runaway who hides out in a nearby abandoned church, who has suffered the world too much and can endure it no longer. Abe, for that is the man's name, has come to proclaim to them, in accents dull and dreary, and only intermittently coherent, the corruption, pain and terror of history: his son died in Vietnam, his wife committed suicide, his daughter is a nag and her husband a lout, and everybody, including government officials and high brass, was getting his in the great PX scandals. Having delivered himself of his harrowing tale and pronounced anathema upon the world, he stark naked flings himself over the edge of America into the wild seas below. One can discern in their stoic response that the Sorensons too think the world a pretty awful place and themselves well out of it. Of such stuff is domestic epic spun and whole worlds enacted in one little family.

By mythic formula and nothing else Abe's death apparently makes possible their life—a wholly willed, fancy, rather grandiose redemption. Suddenly the air clears; suddenly the drift of their lives finds direction; suddenly she gathers new strength and he renewed resolve. They're going to be all right; they're going to live their lives, build their house, maybe, who knows, adopt a child, have a baby. They're going to come through.

In college workshops across the land this sort of thing sometimes goes by the name of "creative writing"; there still exist undergraduates who are moved by it.

Saul Maloff

SAUL MALOFF's *most recent novel is* Heartland *(Scribners).*

Coming

Norman J. Gallo
on two
Mishima
biographies

The Hermit
by Eugene Ionesco

(Viking; $6.95)

Berenger, the principal character of Ionesco's *Rhinoceros,* remarks to his friend Jean: "I just can't get used to life." This is precisely the difficulty with the narrator of Ionesco's first novel, *The Hermit.* He has the financial means, however—thanks to an inheritance from an American uncle—to give up an unappetizing job and retreat to an apartment in the Paris suburbs. He submits to his flirtation with idleness at the age of 35. He reminds us a bit of Huysmans' Des Esseintes *(Against the Grain)* as he plans certain future activities: "To have your apéritif in a different café every day, now that could be a real voyage of discovery. Trying a new drink every day would be, too."

Idleness, it turns out, suits him no better than work. His world-weariness keeps getting the better of him, and boredom, frustration and nausea (three of his favorite words) take over. He gets a temporary reprieve when a waitress, Yvonne, moves in with him, but their brief liaison is marred by his silences and his depressive habits. He becomes increasingly a recluse and finally barricades himself in his apartment when a revolution threatens to destroy his neighborhood. He emerges an indeterminate period later ("Time went by. Months went by. Years maybe") to find himself and the world grown older.

It is tempting to use adjectives like "existential" and "absurd" when speaking of Ionesco's narrator. Indeed his vocabulary favors turns like "nausea of nothingness," "nausea of the infinite," and "metaphysical anxiety." He seems to have much in common with Sartre's Roquentin *(Nausea)* and Camus' Meursault *(The Stranger).* Yet in the end, he is an authentic unique, very much a child of Ionesco's imagination. This is the Ionesco who admitted in his memoir, *Present Past, Past Present:* "I have a tendency, almost always, to be against my time, to be swimming against the stream." *The Hermit* and its narrator-hero surely appear to be going against the grain of contemporary notions of fictional technique and characterization.

The narrative itself—unlike most recent fiction—proceeds in an unbroken, strictly chronological line. The first-person storyteller, who remains unnamed, painstakingly describes every detail of his existence. He spares us nothing: he supplies us with the titles of the books in his library (fortunately they are not very numerous); he gives us the menu of the various meals he eats in his favorite restaurant; he offers an almost verbatim transcription of a telephone conversation he has with a philosophy student. This is not to suggest that his narrative habits at all resemble the cataloguing procedures we have grown accustomed to in the novels of contemporaries like Samuel Beckett, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Nathalie Sarraute, Michel Butor and Claude Simon. *The Hermit,* on the contrary, relies on conventional and even old-fashioned devices that acknowledge the importance of character, plot and theme.

Aside from the narrator's almost clinical insistence on detail, he has a tendency to connect every happening in the outside world, however casual, with his own psyche. He makes the crucial observation at one point: "Or rather, what was going on outside was going on in me. The outside was beginning to reflect the inside." His classic French case of *ennui* makes him turn increasingly inward and concern himself more and more with self ("What is this 'I'? Does it exist?") and with consciousness.

This narrator has a genuine gift for aphoristic turns: "There was still a measure of joy possible, if you stood aside and simply watched the madding crowd"; "When one is not a great philosopher, one should not philosophize"; "I know that the world is always and indefatigably virgin." If he had heeded the wisdom of certain of these maxims, he would probably have accommodated himself better to living in the world. But this man, Ionesco seems to be telling us, can make elegant phrases but is incapable of transforming theory into practice.

He is not unlike the characters in Ionesco's plays. Indeed a knowledge of the drama is very helpful in understanding certain of the fictional strategies at work in *The Hermit.* Ionesco's almost unique ability to turn reality into phantasmagoria and nightmare, with no warning, gives readers the same chilling sensation in his first novel that theatergoers have been getting for some time from *Rhinoceros, The Lesson* and *The Chairs.* The crankily precise way that the narrator of *The Hermit* chooses to spend his days scarcely prepares us for the vagueness that surrounds the revolution and the uncertainties about time following the moment he locks himself in his apart-

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ment. There is nothing in the language of this narrator either to suggest a change; it maintains a monotonous sameness and is syntactically correct and coherent from first to last.

We must end by questioning the credibility of the narrator who describes himself on one occasion as "the constant dreamer." His increasing confusion about reality makes us doubt his reliability. For example, after the waitress' departure he is never sure whether her name is Yvonne or Marie. When he begins to examine the causes of the revolution, the best he can come up with is: "The fact was, I didn't understand the first thing about why they were fighting. But I had to assume there was indeed a reason."

Ionesco posed an interesting question in *Present Past, Past Present:* "Who is there who can distinguish reality from a mirage?" Certainly not the narrator of *The Hermit.* Certainly not the reader of Ionesco's first novel.

Melvin J. Friedman

MELVIN J. FRIEDMAN *teaches at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. His edition of* Samuel Beckett Now *will be published in revised second edition by The University of Chicago Press in February.*

The Snoopy Festival
by Charles M. Schulz

(Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $9.95)

That Snoopy! If recollection serves, Charlie Brown's dog began where Dagwood's Daisy left off, a silent, even passive witness to human folly, occasionally giving off a bubble of gassid comment. He was a generic descendant of Buster Brown's Tige, that fabulous canine who smiled with human teeth, and both were variations on a traditional genre touch, the Boy and his Dawg. But, in time, as the *Peanuts* gallery expanded to include more unlikely children, increasing our suspicion that they are actually midgets, Snoopy took on a larger and more complex role, until, as this present collection reveals, he has become a little dogpersonality, walking, very nearly talking, even sitting at table and enjoying an occasional root beer. Once a distinctly minor character, at times he now threatens to take over the strip.

Such are the joys and dangers of serial literature, as Shakespeare (Falstaff), Fenimore Cooper (Leatherstocking) and Mark Twain (Huckleberry Finn) discovered. But when anthropomorphics are the subject, then we are in the world of Mickey Mouse, where some interesting analogies to *Peanuts* hold. During the '30s Disney's mouse sired a whole zoo of increasingly manic companions. Where Mickey started his career as a rodent version of the Marx Brothers, by the end of the decade he was a much quieter, if not exactly a church, mouse. Disney admitted that Mickey, his primal creation, was a sort of subvert expression of his own inner man, but as Walt got rich the mouse became respectable. Starting out as a raffish, vulgar, often violent manifestation of id, Mickey ended up as a stolid, middle-class citizen, complete with hat, business suit and pointed-toe shoes, becoming at last the equivalent of Walt himself, a sort of middle-mouse, more a manager than an actor in the company.

Snoopy provides the Dionysian element, the free-floating shadow for a thoroughly Freudened Jung *Mensch.* Charlie Brown is not a *Mittel*—but an *Untermensch;* though he shares Mickey's mantle as a member of the managerial class, he can't ever get his crazy team to play ball. A mousey Durocher, he is the eternal victim of plots, jibes, sneers, a *Schlemiel* Hamlet. Schulz has let on that Charlie is *his* darling, his alter ego, but his boy is Mickey's antithesis, a personification of the scared little man down inside us all. Charlie Brown is a Casper Milquetoast for the rising generation, a projection of the quiet '50s into the '60s and beyond. He has remained consistently quietist from the very beginning, even permitting a token kneegrow on his team as times and occasion demanded—as nameless an Oreo as IBM could desire. As Schulz grew rich and famous among the apple-cheeked masses, Snoopy grew rampant, his masquerade more varied, giving the collective id of *Peanuts* a wider and wider range of identities to match the aggregate ego of Charlie and his team, until he now threatens to become *Überhund,* top if not super dog.

Chief ego figure, of course, is Lucy, that Apollonian beam of light in Charlie's eye, who serves the dual function of devouring mother and Ann Landers, dealing out clouts and stern advice for a nickel. She is Charlie's chief tormenter and the sister-antithesis of poor Linus, a fussbudget incarnate who simply cannot play ball with the boys. Her nemesis is Snoopy, the doggy Dionysus who can demolish her with a kiss. For Snoopy has a dog's license, which is the freedom of the dreamer to do whatever he pleases—including loving bunnies, not chasing them. As family dog he has become top banana (nose), the Mister Peanut of them all. From a *bona fide* cartoon Fido, licensed to give off occasional indigestive comments, Snoopy has become a veritable repertory company of exchangeable personae, from a World War I pilot of a Sopwith Camel to Joe Cool, campus cutout. His 2x2 doghouse contains by now a hi-fi and a pooltable, aclutterments of uncanine consumption, the residence of not only the absolute pampered pet but the bedroom of the kid who has everything. More important he is given loose leash, granted the freedom to go on those kinds of quests traditionally associated with the *Bildungsroman* qualities of the American novel: the return home again, the search for a parent, the voyage into the great unknown, etc., a *Steppenhund,* a *Wilhelm* in search of his *Meister.* As if to emphasize his literaryness, Snoopy has recently become a would-be author, but as *auteur* he is

"As the economy becomes more and more shaky, the public begins to explore new possibilities in politics. Increasingly they have come to see that the corporations and their top government allies are at the center of what ails the society, be it the destruction of forests, skyrocketing meat prices, or gas shortages." —Robert Scheer

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still his own best creation, and his favorite role remains that William Faulknerian projection of wish fulfillment, the flying cavalier engaged in an endless, invisible dogfight with the Red Baron, his humble doghouse the vehicle of perilous flights of fancy.

Schulz has in effect miniaturized the cast of the Thurber carnival in his *Snoopy Festival*, his battle of the sexes being an infinite number of triste-go-rounds between his beleaguered little boys and a growing legion of threatening, sexless mini-Amazons. Lucy shares with the Thurber woman a helmet of clotted hair and a swift punch to the polar sexes, and more often than not gets her comeuppance, the agent of same being not Charlie Brown but Snoopy, a dreamy beagle clearly descended from those amorphous dogs of Thurber's wild imagination. If Charlie Brown and the Thurber male owe something to Webster's Milquetoast, then Snoopy is a dogged derivation from that singular Thurber male, Walter Mitty, even if his flying doghouse does not make funny noises. He has increasingly become the dog that walks on two feet, a comic strip equivalent, not of Disney's animated pups, but a gentled-down re-creation of the dogs of Jack London and James Oliver Curwood. He is also, let it be remembered, a dog whose star ascended during the '70s, blazoned abroad by kids who preferred Snoopy to Charlie-Brown shirts, a furry manifestation of *Hair*, *Godspell*, according to *Peanuts*.

Such are the manifestations of *Zeitgeist*, that Schulz, at the start a creator of an avatar of middle-class spirit, has most recently added Woodstock to his country, a bird symbolic of the '70s, not knowing whether he is a dove or a hawk. Snoopy's "Friend of Friends," Woodstock shares room on the top board of the doghouse with his good buddy. Indeed Snoopy of late has become a bit spoony concerning his feathered friend; bird and dog threatening to unite in some kind of Platonic puppy-love. Where Lucy brought out the beast in Snoopy, Woodstock, alas, brings out the wurst, for Snoopy in love is like George Washington smiling, not an impossible but hardly a suitable guise. Schulz's dog has even stopped kicking his master ("Old what's-his-name, the kid with the round head") around, and is losing altitude fast. Kick that bird off the doghouse, Snoopy honey, before it's too late!

John Seelye

Woodstock Again

Young Men with Unlimited Capital . . . by Joel Rosenman, John Roberts and Robert Pilpel

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $6.95)

Just before the weekend of August 16, 1969, campers and cars of every hue were rushing toward Bethel, New York for the largest hoedown, turn on, dopers' gala and rock 'n' roll fête of all time. And whenever they stopped for gas or eats, youths lolled across stools, attracting stares. They were already putting on the show of their lives well before everyone noticed that their collective slouching toward Bethel to be born was almost—but not quite—like Yeats' poem, "The Second Coming." Although they proudly comprised a rough beast, their hour had not come round at last. Now—after Nixon, Vietnam, Altamont and numerous dead superstars—we remember Woodstock Nation merely as Woodstock Weekend, one zany moment in a zany decade. What a difference those years have told!—from our expectancy, to the present modified, limited, hangtight road through the inflation and toward the depression, from a watershed to Watergate.

Two of Woodstock's promoters (with Pilpel's help) have written this managers'-eye account (surely) to recover part of the money they lost. Its effect on us, however, is to permit partial recovery of the larger capital we lost when we stopped believing in Woodstocks. The book succeeds because the authors speak surprisingly well for the generation pumped through the institutional hose of the land and sprayed forth in the middle of the decade; young and with unlimited hope, the world was for their making. So they thought. But then their world washed over them, creating itself instead of them. Woodstock became not a spurious but a genuine phenomenon, like the half decade it embodied.

A modest book about an immodest happening, *Young Men* suggests the way events overwhelmed not only our expectations but also our subsequent desire to discover the logic in all occurrences. Woodstock was a flashflood, an unesthetic eruption past structure. Roberts and Rosenman smilingly tell how their control of an idea for a rock concert gradually slipped away as the idea mushroomed around them. They planned to manipulate a scene that would make them richer. But the scene got out of hand, and they continued to write checks overdrawing their accounts (total expenses, $3.4 million).

Without limits, measure or order, the whole affair still had a center. To say it had a heart would imply both conventional emotion and a regular beat; and we all know Woodstock was mindless. Yet because Woodstock merely approximated the ideal, the center remains uncertain, ineffable and ungainly. The music approaches the ideal most successfully, perhaps, but remains only the notation of the center. We even tend to forget what the peripheries of the late '60s were really like. The be-ins, music festivals, communal activities, mass demonstrations—all were as pellmell as children in search of a piper, lemmings a cliff, or grunion a share. Something still unexposed, still inarticulate, was there. But what?

Each event had its own syncopation, its own beats; each event was as irregular, motley and mongrel as its ideal was subversive. Like its fellow phenomena, only more so, Woodstock was a spontaneous attempt to bring into view through unrequited need a truly polymorphous perversity surpassing previous notions of order and coherence, politics and esthetics. Coagulating around a whisper of surprise, eclecticism and inclusiveness, the music and relations of Woodstock abandoned belief in order, coherence or any constructed strategies for encompassing experience. Woodstock Ventures became an ad hoc adventure.

Life said Woodstock stretched the system but the system held. Nonsense. At Woodstock, as Roberts and Rosenman show, there was no strategy, no system, no compass. Instead there was a happy siege mentality, a diffuse absorption of disparate plenty, and a projection of untrammeled exuberance. Still this wasn't simply mob wackiness. Unlike the Bonus Army come from the country to storm Washington, or peasants with pitchfork and torch breaking into the Bastille, the Woodstock slouchers had no specific goal. They were going the other way: breaking away from the city to the

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country. Naively hoping for tunes on a rustic Saturday, they nevertheless brought all that electric energy along. Their berserk achievement was this: they transported megapolitan manias to a yeoman's yard, amplified angst in Max Yasgur's pasture. It was a yoking for which no one was prepared.

But it was a yoking we might have foreseen. The war, the post-scarcity economy and the renaissance in popular arts ripened the mood of apocalypse. Moreover it may turn out that the most important theme in the social thinking of those years was the exhortation to reexperience childhood. In any case Woodstock more clearly than any other event dramatized the natural link between the second coming and the second childhood upon which America had embarked. Woodstock defined the last half of its decade. The peak of the next five years has been the antithetical phenomenon of Watergate, an event which also overwhelmed its planners. It's a gloomy thought that we may be caroming between the likes of Woodstock and Watergate for years yet to come. The pun on "stone" in Bob Dylan's song is the only moral I can raise: "They'll stone you when you're trying to be so good . . . Everybody must get stoned." Whether we worry about the stones of repression or perversity, the rocks are rolling in the land and the outcome is not yet clear.

W.T. Lhamon, Jr.

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Poetry of Note

Collected Poems, 1924-1974
by John Beecher
(Macmillan; $8.95)

Or Else—Poem/Poems 1968-1973
by Robert Penn Warren
(Random House; $6.95)

Walking the Boundaries: Poems 1957-1974
by Peter Davison
(Atheneum; $6.95)

Two of the South's elder poets, John Beecher (b. 1904) and Robert Penn Warren (b. 1905), have recently come out with new books. Despite sharing some similar material (*e.g.*, lynchings, memories of ancestors) they could scarcely be more different. They represent a confrontation of the establishment (Warren) and the radical (Beecher); the establishment remains unshaken.

Beecher is a sort of proletarian poet coming from the old New England aristocracy of preachers and teachers. In his poem "And I Will Be Heard" he traces his family back to Massachusetts Bay in the 1660s, and includes in it Lyman Beecher, who organized the "Underground Railroad," Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Ward Beecher, Nathan Hale and Edward Everett Hale. As a young man Beecher moved to Alabama and has been associated with the South ever since (probably his best known book is *To Live and Die in Dixie*, 1966). Unable to find mainstream acceptance he turned printer and published many of his books himself. Now in this large volume of *Collected Poems*, Macmillan has brought Beecher to the marketplace.

He is a "public" poet, a poet of causes, particularly of the steelworkers and blacks of the South. There is not much soul-searching, not much mystery in either his language or his subject matter. What holds one's interest is the plain facts of the stories he tells: the horror of being poor and/or black at the mercy of the rich and/or white. These are familiar tales—the Ku Klux Klan, the murders, beatings, the incredible callousness of the bosses—but infused with the obvious genuineness of Beecher's sympathy and anger. Poems like "The Best Steel in the World," "Think It Over, America," "In Egypt Land" still pack an emotional wallop. Most of these were written before Americans had even heard or thought of the civil rights movement, but, in the absence of other qualities, truth and sincerity do not a good poem make.

There are many irritants: perhaps like most prophets, Beecher often lapses into self-praising righteousness (*e.g.*, he quotes someone as telling him "you're too creative for government"); when he tries satire, it is too heavy and simplistic, as in "Josiah Turnbull Took No Part in Politics," which ends (after Turnbull makes great profit by dealing with the British quartermaster instead of the "starving Continentals"):

Josiah Turnbull stretched and yawned deeply
in his smug Philadelphia parlor
comfortably reflecting
that he took no part in politics

But Beecher in general doesn't quote well: one needs to read the whole story.

Beecher himself is a fascinating character, a brave and direct man who goes over well with today's students, who see him (correctly) as a man who fought various establishments, poetic and otherwise, and has come out as his own man. Macmillan should be praised for bringing out this volume; they will soon publish Beecher's autobiography as well.

Where Beecher's poems go outward to society, Robert Penn Warren's book, *Or Else*, travels inward into "the dark pit of self," examining his thoughts about death, the nature of time, his dreams, his relation to his father and indeed to the universe. The poems are rich and allusive, even when conversational in tone:

Nor do you know the truth, which is:
Seize the nettle of innocence in
both your hands, for this is the
only
way, and every
Ulcer in love's lazaret may, like a
dawn-stung gem, sing—or even
burst into whoops of, perhaps,
holiness.
But in any case, watch the clock
closely. Hold your breath
and wait.
Nothing happens, nothing happens,
then suddenly, quick
as a wink,
and slick as a mink's prick, Time
thrusts through the time
of no-Time.

A fascination with death runs through

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these poems, sometimes terrifying as in the dream poem where he sees the corpses of his parents sitting in their old chairs; always tentative in his insistent probing for the meaning that death brings to existence. This tentativeness is one of the major differences between Beecher and Warren: Beecher knows the answers because his questions are easier; Warren circles around the mystery of life and death with his unanswerable questions. This circular feeling gives *Or Else* a unity of tone; it could be considered one long poem, as Warren suggests. Even the already well-known set pieces, "Flaubert in Egypt" and "Homage to Theodore Dreiser," deal with the same concerns.

The Dreiser poem ends:

He is no philosopher.
His only gift is to enact
All that his deepest self abhors,
And learn, in his self-contemptive distress,
The secret worth
Of all our human worthlessness.

Or Else is filled with moving poetry; "Reading Late At Night, Thermometer Falling," a poem about Warren's father, is a great triumph.

Peter Davison's blank verse, trimeter couplets, villanelles and other tight forms are in high contrast to Beecher's prosiness and Warren's jagged rhythms. *Walking the Boundaries* offers a selection from Davison's first three books plus 25 new poems, an excellent introduction to a very capable poet.

The new poems reflect a heightened ability to write about nature, marked by close and loving observation. The title poem is particularly fine; after describing in great detail the flight and song of a woodcock who seems to be trying to break through the sky, Davison concludes:

How much is left behind at boundaries!
Arising from the sea we lost our lightness.
Thought took us to the woods, where vision blurred,
for sight and mind do not take wing together.
Body at least is bound within a landscape,
an earth that holds us fastened to the seasons
for food and footing, birth and burial.
Regardless of the gifts we've left behind
and all the boundaries we cannot cross,
some power lets us press beyond our powers:
echoes of wind, of ebb and flow, of heartbeat,
singing that trickles landward with the waters,
music that clambers skyward through the dark.

Peter Meinke

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Intelligent Guide

Which Tribe Do You Belong To? by Alberto Moravia

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $7.95)

Another well known writer cranking out a narrative of his travels in Africa? Another white man discovering the answer to his problems in darkest Africa? Fortunately neither of these facets of the African sickness has much to do with *Which Tribe Do You Belong To?* Instead Alberto Moravia has written a most penetrating account of Africa's multiplicity, a truly kaleidoscopic picture of the troubled years that have plagued the African nations ever since their initial exposure to the West.

Moravia made five lengthy trips to Africa between 1963 and 1972, covering much of the continent south of the Sahara. He took in the obvious watering spots (Abidjan, Accra, Lagos, Nairobi, Dar es Salaam), but also searched out the more obscure and therefore typically African sites off the normal traveler's map: Rey Buba, Ujiji, Kigoma, Baudia-

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gara. From these and the many other places he visited one might expect a descriptive account of unusual sites and customs, but that is not what Moravia gives us, though the descriptive passages are often as fine as anything that has been written about Africa by someone not of the continent itself. Rather here we have an intelligent overview of Africa's death struggle with the West, accompanied by a sensitive discussion of all its important historical stages: "discovery" by the early explorers, slavery, the movement toward self-determination, the neocolonial period since the false start known as independence.

Not content to let his own impressions control his writing, Moravia has tried to balance his feelings by reading almost everything about Africa he could find. As he tells us, "If one travels and stays in Africa, one acquires what is . . . an irresistible curiosity to know more about the so-called mysterious continent." He tried to understand why others before him have gone to Africa—early explorers Stanley, Livingstone, Baker, Speke, Burton—of whom he concludes: "Nothing in their writings suggests that their explorations in Africa enriched them culturally, aesthetically, morally, etc." When he visits the sites of the former Zanzibar slave markets, he writes: "Seeing that the culture of the Negroes was different from theirs, [the slavers] concluded that the Negroes were not men but beasts. In other words, the slave-owner was a racialist of a very modern type; in the name of culture, he denied the slave humanity. . . ." The idea of culture, Moravia knows, has always been the most convenient way of building up the myth of racial superiority. Early explorers and missionaries did not "discover" Africa, they covered it over with European civilization in order "to allow time to those who came after them . . . to invade the unfortunate continent, to occupy it, to subdue it, to divide it into lots, without scruple and without sense of guilt."

Of more recent events, he writes with equal perception, reacting to an Englishman's comments about Mau Mau terrorism this way: "With all their bestiality, [they] achieved in a few years what other colonialized peoples did not contrive to extort in centuries." Of the civil war in Nigeria he states, "The defeat of Biafra was the defeat of the tribal conception." One has the feeling that Moravia's comprehension is not alone that of the historian or the political scientist, but also of the Africanist versed in anthropology, economics, art and

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religion.

The book is also useful. Somewhere in these essays is just about everything the traveler needs to know: bits and pieces about African food and hotels ("touristic violence" Moravia calls it); astute comments on Africa's people (including the Asian minorities and the last of the *colons);* sad, but true, statements about the rape of Africa's wildlife—all described with a sharp cutting edge, in a good translation by Angus Davidson. One quotation will suffice. Of the Hotel Ivoire in Abidjan (that haven for thousands of European travelers, complete with multiple swimming pools and an ice-skating rink), Moravia says:

> *The hotel has no relationship with Africa; it has a relationship only with the West of which it is both an emanation and an outpost. It takes five hours to fly from Paris to the hotel; but it is often impossible to reach villages not more than about a hundred kilometres from Abidjan. The narrow network of connections between the hotel and Rome, Paris, London and New York is, on consideration, the cause of the complete lack of connection between the hotel and the village.*

I used to think that the most important book one could read for a general overview of life in Africa today was Colin Turnbull's *The Lonely African* (1962). Now there are two books—Turnbull's and Moravia's. These days it is not very easy for a white man to say something intelligent about Africa.

Charles R. Larson

CHARLES R. LARSON *is the author of* The Emergence of African Fiction *(Indiana University Press).*

Fine Print

Richards and Etcetera

Doris Grumbach

Published last year and recommended to me by a reviewer who had been struck by its photographic force and eloquence, **Few Comforts or Surprises** (MIT Press; $9.95, $7.95 paper) is a book no one can open and then shut quickly or, having once become engaged with it, will be able to put out of mind. What photographer (and writer) Eugene Richards saw (and then recorded) in the Southeastern part of Arkansas—the Delta—is poverty, sickness, death, faith, some gaiety, sorrow on the faces of suffering men, women and children, but most of all a muddy, impoverished wasteland of shanties, stores, box-churches, waste, mud, trash. He has shown us a vision of life so tragic and hopeless that other places one may have seen or seen photographed pall before it.

The narrative, which forms only a small part of this chronicle of spiritual imprisonment, tries hard to accompany the incredible photographs, but fails perhaps because the written word lacks the innate power of the picture, but more because Richards' style is often awkward and strained, attempting a poeticism it cannot possibly reach. But no matter. The photographs are so full of poignant detail, so unsentimental and cold-eyed, and yet, despite the fact that this lens has no tint to it, so full of compassion for the subjects and their ugly environment, that the book takes on a pulsing, exhausting life of its own. Richards came to the area in 1968 as a VISTA worker, stayed two years and clearly has never left it. Nor will anyone else who is fortunate enough to happen upon his book.

Etcetera: One of the bashes that literary editors, reviewers and, I'm sure, publicists and judges looked forward to every year was the **National Book Award** doings in New York. Publishers' parties were lavish and there was a modicum of meetings to attend, just enough to justify all the eating and drinking and socializing. Well in these days of publishers' tightened belts and budgets, the National Book Committee (now 20 years old) has decided (rightly, I think) to disband. The 1975 awards will be made in April, but there are no plans for the usual ceremonies and celebrations of the awards. The winners will, presumably, pocket their thousand dollars and their consequent royalties, and creep quietly, undined and unwined, all the way to the bank.

Gale Research Company puts out a reference work called **Encyclopedia of Associations** ($55). The ninth edition of the encyclopedia will appear in January '75, will contain detailed entries for 14,500 organizations, some 1000 of which are being listed for the first time, among them the Dracula Society, the National Migraine Foundation, the Center for a Woman's Own Name, the Red Suspender League and the International Grooving and Grinding. These societies come and go. Editor Margaret Fisk informs us there are 20,000 changes since the last edition. Most notable change: the Committee for Honesty in Politics is no longer in existence.

The University of Utah Press reports

The Carpenter

"And who wants poets at all in lean years?"
Hölderlin, translated by Michael Hamburger

And who wants carpenters either in lean years?
Trees fall, often on our own heads. My friend
the carpenter wonders about this. Having sold
almost all his books and made a shop, he lost
a fingertip in the process of making hundreds
of lovely boxes for Schlage Lock, so that they may
be opened by electric eyes, for the Public Safety.
My friend wonders what is the use of carpentry
in a plastic time, but then what else is to be done?
He says this about poetry too, and the poet about, and for, him.

TODD GITLIN

TODD GITLIN *is the author of a new book of poetry,* Busy Being Born *(Straight Arrow).*

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that it is now flourishing financially and intellectually, which puts it in a special category for both university and trade publishers. It has accomplished this feat by facing its "substantial deficit" four years ago and virtually starting again. What did it do? First, the University Council voted it "start-over" funds, with the stipulation that future income would apply to the repayment of these funds. Second, under a new director who was moved up to that spot from copy editor, it cut its staff from 26 to six, turned off its water cooler (thus saving enough money a month to buy stamps), made up its committed backlog of 17 books, and then reduced its yearly list to 12, in that way avoiding overcommitment and at the same time giving each staff member a chance to be personally involved with every book. The press is much concerned with the design of its books—one, Clarice Short's book of poetry, won an award for being one of the 50 best-designed books in the US last year—and with promotion and circulation. Being back in the black after so long has given director Norma Mikkelsen a feeling of security. Sign: she has ordered the water cooler turned back on.

Troubles at Macmillan continue. Aaron Asher, editor-in-chief of the general books division for four stormy months, has resigned; other senior editors have left, including the editor of the children's book department, and its managing editor. I repeat all this "news" only because yesterday I came upon the July 22, 1974 *Publishers Weekly* in which there appears a five-page interview with Macmillan's chairman, Raymond C. Hagel. What was he saying three months before the October 14 mass dismissal of 200 personnel and the subsequent departure of many others?

Asked about the role of editors at Macmillan:

> Hagel: *The greatest problem in any large company is that sheer size tends to reduce our sense of individuality. That's precious. We have to protect it.*
>
> Asked: *Over the years there has grown in the trade a feeling that Macmillan is a revolving door for editors and executives. How did this negative image of Macmillan come about, and what is being done to correct it?*
>
> Hagel: *By and large, we never have had the mass exoduses that have been associated with other publishing houses. We've tried hard to avoid them. True, sometimes people have left the company by request. Occasionally we have fired someone for cause. On the other hand, we've had people leave for the best reasons in the world . . . It seems to me that it is also a compliment to Macmillan to have people who have been trained here valued so highly.*
>
> *I have never known anyone who has been ashamed to mention that he has worked for Macmillan. It usually is the first thing that goes on an application for a new job. As long as that happens I'm not really worried.*
>
> *I am proud that today, on the whole, we have more and better editors in our trade, school and college publishing divisions than ever before. Our confidence in them is mirrored in the record investments we have been making and will continue to make in our lists.*

No comment.

Reviewed in these pages (*TNR*, Oct. 19, 1974) were three novels from the **Fiction Collective.** From the pages of *Coda*, the poets and writers newsletter, I learn that those first titles, by Jonathan Baumbach *(Reruns)*, *Museum* by B. H. Friedman, and *Twiddledum Twaddledum* by Peter Spielberg, all sold out before their publishing date in October. The three writers "worked ten hours a day, seven days a week" for a year to do their own publishing. Their printing investment may be repaid by sales, if returns from bookstores are not too heavy but "will never pay the value of their time." The collective exists as "a not-for-profit cooperative conduit" for quality fiction. More operating details: each title costs $3500 to publish. This money is loaned to the collective by the writer and is paid back to him from sales receipts after discounts and distribution costs are deducted. Distribution is by George Braziller, the nine members of the group operate from an office given to them by Brooklyn College, and they hope to have a list of 10-12 books a year which they will sell for $7.95 hardcover and $3.95 in paper. The print order is 500 copies, but the potential profit is reduced by the fact that few books are ever sold at retail price. The cooperative has sold 30 books thus far at full price, many more to bookstores at 40 percent discount, library jobbers at 50 percent. The collective can with luck just about break even on a title, so it is a brave venture worthy of support and encouragement. The New York State Council on the Arts has just given it a grant for administrative expenses.

Word reached me indirectly that **Southern Voices,** in its first year and fourth copy, is in serious financial straits. This is a magazine (six times a year; $7) of growing quality that celebrates, as its editor said in the last issue "the potential of people." Published in Atlanta, Georgia it celebrates as well the real South, its natural beauty, its troubles and triumphs, even its baking. (The recent issue has a mouth-watering piece called "A Treatise Upon Corn Bread.") Editor Pat Watters tells me that they will suspend publication for at least one issue, until April/May '75, in order to reorganize the business end of the magazine, and to recast its advertising. From its present 23,000 subscribers *Southern Voices* is pressing to get renewals, gift subscriptions and donations, with an eye to eventually having about 100,000 subscribers. Meanwhile I send them my fraternal hopes that they, like Faulkner's Dilsy, will endure. They deserve to.

Kauffmann, *from page 18*

faith in his profession, has no passion about it. I couldn't believe it. The man we see *is* a man of passion: it's Shaffer who imposes on him the things he says, contrary to the passionate life we see him leading, because it's Shaffer who needs those statements for his neat recipe.

Peter Handke (as a contrary example) took the story of Kaspar Hauser for a play because it provided a dramatic means for Handke's philosophy. That process, on internal evidence, seems reversed here. Peter Shaffer hears a shocking story, then dredges around

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for some materials—Apollo-Dionysus, lurking Pan, lurking Laing—to give it body and to "serious" it up. The result is certainly not dreadful or boring. I've noted only a few of the many effective moments; and Shaffer's writing as such, though he can't be said to have developed a distinguishable style, never falls below that minimal adroitness with which most British writers apparently are born. But the atmosphere of manufacture, of utilization, makes Shaffer seem a creator of modish dramatic interiors, smartly furnished with whatever ideas happen to be going at the moment.

A few things in the production are unfortunate. The device of having all the actors always remain on stage at the sides is a trite and quite pointless trick (and a dreadful strain on the waiting actors' attention). Roberta Maxwell, whom I've liked greatly in *Slag* and *Miss Julie*, is miscast as the stable girl. She's too old and too complex for the part. But John Dexter, the director, has made the play swirl and flare. He has used his six "horses"—young men in leotards with wire stilts and wire equine masks—with a centaur's eye. He has got a stunning, elemental performance of the boy from Peter Firth, who also played it in London. And he has helped that good actor Anthony Hopkins (now visible in *The Girl from Petrovka* and *Juggernaut*) to model his immense role with depth and idiosyncrasy. I wish that Hopkins wouldn't say "chooldren" for "children," but I'm grateful for practically everything else that he does. How well he times pauses with his *thoughts*, how well he balances dedication and humor and embarrassment about his own emotions. Michael Higgins is solid as the boy's father, and blessed Frances Sternhagen has one of the best moments: a speech in which the boy's pious schoolteacher-mother rejects the doctrine of absolute parental responsibility for a child's psyche, puts some of the burden on the boy himself, and declares her belief in the devil.

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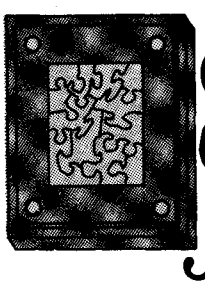

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